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Blue Arrow advisers guilty after £35m trial

By BILL FROST AND
MATTHEW BOND

Stainforth: acquitted of conspiracy to defraud

FOUR former City advisers to the Blue Arrow employment agency were yesterday convicted of conspiracy to defraud at the end of an Old Bailey trial that lasted more than a year and cost an estimated £35 million. A fifth man was acquitted.

The hearing was adjourned until Monday when Mr Justice McKinnon is expected to pass sentence. All four remain on bail.

The jury was told that the four men deliberately misled the market at the time of Blue Arrow's record £837 million rights issue so that the recruitment group could take over Manpower, a larger American employment company. The conspirators concealed vital information which showed that the rights issue of shares had been "a flop".

The case was the most expensive

criminal trial to be held in Britain. Chichester Rents, the Old Bailey annex, was converted into courtrooms especially for the 187-day hearing. Jury members were estimated to have received about £15,000 each in attendance allowances and monthly fees for each legal team, are thought to have reached about £100,000.

The four men found guilty on unanimous verdicts were: Jonathan Cohen, aged 48, deputy chief executive of NatWest Investments Bank and chief executive of County NatWest at the time of the rights issue; David Reed, aged 44, former executive and managing director of corporate finance at County NatWest; Nicholas Wells, aged 37, former County NatWest executive director and a former member of the corporate advisory department; and Martin Gibbs, aged 62, former director of UBS Phillips & Drew Christo-

pher Stainforth, aged 38, a former director of UBS Phillips & Drew corporate finance, was acquitted.

The convictions will come as a relief in a week of mixed fortunes for the Serious Fraud Office and Barbara Mills, its outgoing head and director-designate of public prosecutions. The verdicts followed a direction by the judge for the jury to acquit three corporate defendants and two other City advisers. The collapse of the second Guinness trial caused the office some embarrassment, but the case against Peter Clowes produced a conviction and ten-year jail sentence.

The Blue Arrow events were symptomatic of how competitive the City of London had become after Big Bang in 1986. For a comparatively new operation such as County NatWest, the Blue Arrow rights issue was a unique opportunity to deal in the corporate finance big

time. For UBS Phillips & Drew, Blue Arrow's stockbroker, the stakes were almost as high. The rights issue ran into trouble quite unexpectedly, however, as the stock market began to show signs of weakness.

On the evening of September 27, 1987, the rights issue deadline, the Blue Arrow advisers met to hear how it had fared. The news was disastrous: only 38 per cent of the issue had been taken up. If the huge rump of the issue passed to underwriters, both County and NatWest faced huge bills and a considerable loss of reputation. The advisers decided the only alternative was to persuade the City that the issue had been a success, which would enable the remaining shares to be placed with institutions eager to buy what they believed was a well-supported stock. What was needed was a rights issue take-up of nearer 50 per cent.

The jury was told that the advisers

secretly bought millions of shares after the deadline passed. In just a few hours, the rights issue had become a comparative success, but every institution that subsequently bought shares did so in the belief that the take-up had been 48.9 per cent. The market had been misled. Prices slumped, however, after the stock market crash in October 1987 and the secret investment had to be accounted for.

Nicholas Purnell, QC, who led the Serious Fraud Office prosecution team, said the conspiracy amounted to the "most arrogant disregard for market practices... These men, confronted by the failure of the issue and the loss of reputation decided the solution was to cheat. They set out to rig the market." Defence lawyers argued that the men were legitimately supporting their client.

End of an era, page 18

Ukraine defiant at Minsk summit

Yeltsin struggles to stop collapse of Soviet army

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW AND ROBERT SEELEY IN MINSK

HOPES of keeping together the armed forces of the former Soviet Union were fading last night as Ukraine clashed with Russia over its insistence on keeping virtually all its troops separate from any unified command.

Tass reported yesterday that six Russian crews of the former Soviet air force have defected from Ukraine with their aircraft rather than take an oath to defend the newly independent state. The aircraft, none of them armed, took off without permission from an air base near

Starokonstantinov and landed in neighbouring Belarusia, Tass said. They continued to a base outside Moscow. The planes did not have their armaments, but the pilots brought with them their regimental banner," the news agency said.

Relations between the republics were further poisoned by a threat from Aleksandr Rutskoi, the Russian vice-president, to take harsh economic sanctions against any states that discriminated against ethnic Russians.

President Yeltsin's deputy, a strident conservative who on Thursday was given new responsibilities for agriculture in the hope of neutralising his attacks on the government, also described as criminal his own administration's economic policies.

Speaking to ITN yesterday morning, he said: "A government that cannot feed its people, where school children are going hungry, and old people have to rummage through dustbins for food... is criminal and should be put on trial."

While the Russian government is technically headed by Boris Yeltsin himself, Mr Rutskoi appeared to be directing his attack at the cabinet and its day-to-day managers of government policy, such as the deputy prime minister, Yegor Gaidar.

In Minsk after a day of confused negotiations, Ukraine and at least two other states — Moldavia and Azerbaijan — appeared adamant in their refusal to merge their newly created forces in a single defensive unit.

The chairman of an increasingly influential council of army officers deplored the poor results of yesterday's meeting. Captain Aleksandr Mochailkin said no decisions on the legal status of servicemen, or on how officers would be divided up between the new republican armies had been taken. Nor was there any consensus on the joint defence budget, or on the vital question of the powers of the commonwealth commander.

As a way of shoring up some semblance of unity, the republican leaders were considering a set of contradictory proposals from Kazakhstan's president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, which sought to put some limits on the break-up

of the Soviet military. Under the Kazakh plan, the army would be split among the republics, only to come together again on a voluntary basis. "All armed forces will be transferred to the jurisdiction of the republics, and then they could form a united force," said a Kazakh spokesman. A working group of Russia, Armenia, Belarusia and Central Asia, was looking at the Kazakh ideas, one version of which appeared to be acceptable to the summit's host, the Belorussian leader, Stanislaw Shushkevich.

Russia's insistence on the principle of unified frontier troops appeared particularly galling to the more independence-minded republics, which argued that this was a characteristic of a single state. Mr Shushkevich favours an independent Belorussian army, but also supports the idea of a unified command during at least the transitional period of two years.

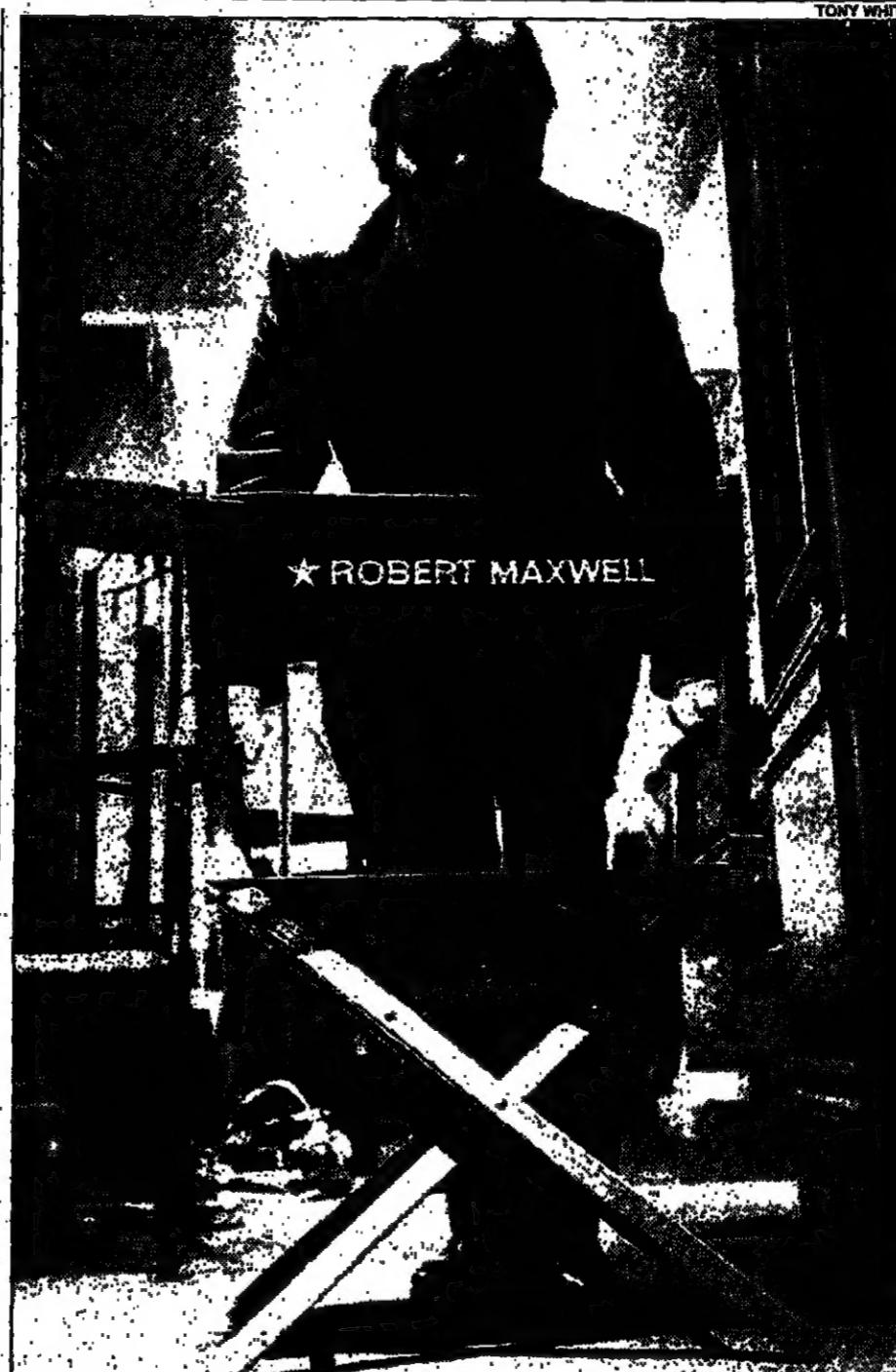
Yesterday's meetings were orderly but it was clear that Ukraine was moving towards the sidelines of the Commonwealth of Independent States. As a state with at least 176 long-range missile sites, it has little choice but to honour its obligation to remain within the Commonwealth umbrella for the purpose of strategic nuclear forces. But Ukrainian participation in any coalition of conventional forces looked remote. Kiev officials said exit from the Commonwealth was only a matter of time unless trade, debt and currency disputes were resolved.

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Uzbek aid, page 9
Leading article, page 13



An unknown buyer paid £800 for a director's chair, believed to have been a gift from the White House, at the auction of contents from the tycoon Robert Maxwell's London flat. Scandal suite, page 2, Tabloid bids, page 10.

Anti-hunting bill is beaten amid uproar in Commons

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

AN ATTEMPT to outlaw fox-hunting was narrowly defeated yesterday as Conservative MPs, including most of the cabinet, voted down a private member's bill after an emotional Commons debate.

Twenty-six Conservative MPs, including two ministers and two whips, supported Mr McNamara's Bill, which has been at the centre of a vigorous campaign by the pro and anti-hunting lobbies, was refused a second reading by 187 votes to 175, a majority of 12, after a free vote.

The result was received in near-uproar by one of the biggest Friday attendances in recent years, with clapping from the public gallery and cries of "shame" from the bill's supporters.

The prime minister was not in the Commons but the cabinet vote turned out to be decisive. Those who opposed the bill were Michael Heseltine, environment secretary, Norman Lamont,

chancellor, John Wakeham, energy secretary, Kenneth Clarke, health secretary, John Gummer, agriculture minister, Michael Howard, employment secretary, Peter Lilley, industry secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, transport secretary, Tom King, defence secretary, David Hunt, Welsh secretary, William Waldegrave, health secretary, Peter Brooke, Northern Ireland secretary, and Ian Lang, Scottish secretary. Two Liberal Democrats, Alan Beith and Menzies Campbell, opposed the bill.

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Inflation fall gives ministers a boost

By PHILIP WEBSTER
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

INFLATION has fallen to just above 4 per cent, strengthening hopes among Conservative MPs of a cut in interest rates before the general election and bringing some relief to ministers from a succession of gloomy economic figures.

Yesterday's good news on prices, with a bigger than expected drop from 4.5 per cent to 4.1 per cent in January, was marred, however, by another round of bleak production figures. Manufacturing output fell 1.2 per cent between the third and fourth quarters of last year with a total drop of 5 per cent over the year. It has now fallen for six consecutive quarters.

Yesterday's figures came in the wake of unwelcome news on unemployment, house repossessions and company losses. But they led Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, to declare that victory over inflation was in sight.

John Smith, his Labour shadow, said that the drop in inflation had been bought at the price of recession and soaring unemployment. Inflation, he added, was being suppressed rather than defeated.

The fall in inflation was helped by heavy price cuts in

Continued on page 16, col 8

Recession deepens, page 17

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Sunderland casts off ailing past to win city status

SUNDERLAND, the former shipbuilding town in the North-East now better known for its links with Nissan, the Japanese car maker, yesterday became Britain's newest city.

Sunderland beat 22 rivals to receive the honour, granted on the personal command of the Queen as a mark of special distinction to celebrate the 40th anniversary of her accession to the throne.

The new city, population 296,100, has been trying for 60 years to achieve that status and has turned down four times. Yesterday's announcement means that it will no longer live in the shadow of its more dominant neighbour, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Local dignitaries celebrated with a champagne toast and flag-raising ceremony on the steps of

the modern civic centre. They intend to invite the Queen to pay an official visit.

David Thompson, the mayor, said: "I can hardly believe it. It hasn't sunk in properly yet. The effect on the people of Sunderland will be immeasurable and the impact on the image of Sunderland throughout the world will be invaluable."

Sunderland, birthplace in the seventh century of the Venerable Bede and, in 1828, of Joseph Swan, inventor of the electric light, was the biggest of 14 towns formally invited last summer to put themselves forward for the honour of city status. Others also sent in applications.

The Labour-run council based its application on the town's contribution to national life, and

The birthplace of the electric light bulb and the Venerable Bede has been given new cause to celebrate at the expense of 22 rivals, Peter Davenport writes

emphasised its new found prosperity after the despair brought about by the collapse of the shipbuilding industry on the River Wear.

In its formal application it said: "Sunderland is proud of its past and of the way it has never succumbed to the fierce extremes of economic adversity which have so often been its historic lot. After a decade or so of painful reconstruction, Sunderland's economy and environment have been transformed, an achievement of almost miraculous proportions."

Nissan's decision to set up a car

manufacturing plant in 1984 was the catalyst for economic regeneration. The current workforce is 3,400, due to rise to 4,600 next year when 175,000 cars a year will roll off the production line. By then total investment by the Japanese company will stand at some £900 million. Other firms have followed.

Yesterday's announcement came the day after a reminder that life was still far from easy in the area; two miners were killed in an accident at the local colliery, Wearmouth.

Sunderland, whose motto is "With God as our leader there is no cause for despair", was ranked as ninth favourite to win the honour, put at 14-1 by the bookmakers William Hill. More fancied towns were Chelmsford, the favourite at 4-1, Brighton, Ipswich and Milton Keynes.

The status of city gives no special privileges or powers and Sunderland's leading citizen will still be plain "mayor". Only 11 cities have been created this century, the most recent being Canterbury in 1988.

The other contenders for cityhood were: Blackburn, Bolton, Colchester, Croydon, Dudley, Guildford, Middlesbrough, Northampton, Preston, Sandwell, Shrewsbury, Southend-on-Sea, Stockport, Telford, Wolverhampton, St David's and Newport in Wales and Armagh in Northern Ireland.

The people of Sunderland welcomed the award. Rose Bell, aged 83, said: "Some people from down south don't like Sunderland. They think we're all daft. I don't know why, it's a wonderful place to live."

MICHAEL POWELL

Patten starts libel action over 'dirty tricks' claim

BY JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

CHRIS PATTEN, the Conservative party chairman, yesterday began legal action against the BBC and Peter Hain, Labour MP, for libel over remarks made by Mr Hain about allegations of a "dirty tricks campaign".

A press release issued by the Conservative party said that Mr Hain made a series of allegations on a BBC *Newshigh* programme last Friday to the effect that Mr Patten had organised or encouraged a concerted campaign of criminal activity "to gain political intelligence to discredit the Labour and Liberal parties".

"These allegations are entirely untrue and the chairman has instructed lawyers to commence appropriate proceedings to fight against the parties concerned - the BBC and Mr Hain - unless suitable retractions, apologies and redress are forthcoming immediately," the release said.

A BBC spokesman said that the letter was now in the hands of its lawyers, and no further comment would be made at this stage.

Last night, Mr Hain issued a statement saying he had no comment about the letter from Mr Patten's solicitors. However, he added: "I will not be gagged by Conservative Central Office about these sinister series of apparently politically motivated pre-election smears and computer burglaries."

Mr Hain said that he stood by the terms of his two parlia-

Rushdie starts year four in hiding

Supporters are stepping up the campaign to lift the *fatwa* on Salman Rushdie, writes Peter Victor.

FRIENDS and supporters of Salman Rushdie laid a heart of roses in Smithfield, central London, yesterday to mark the third anniversary of the Muslim death sentence against him. The flowers were laid beneath a plaque commemorating those executed for heresy.

In Strasbourg, 115 Euro-MPs have signed a resolution expressing sympathy for Mr Rushdie and calling on all member states to press Iran to withdraw the *fatwa* declared by Ayatollah Khomeini after the publication of Mr Rushdie's book, *The Satanic Verses*. Human rights organisations worldwide have condemned the *fatwa* and pressed for it to be removed. Among the countries taking part in events to mark the anniversary will be New Zealand, Australia, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Canada, Ireland and Germany.

Mr Rushdie, aged 44, appealed to the British government last Thursday to persuade Iran to lift the death sentence against him. He artfully programme *Meridian* that the time was coming when Britain and Iran would sit down to sort out their relations. This is only one threat to the fundholding scheme and to the benefits to patients it is delivering, it comes from the Labour party," he said.

The admission by Robin Cook, Labour's health spokesman, in the Commons that he intended to scrap budget holding had isolated him from GPs, the British Medical Association and patients, Mr Waldegrave said.

He has made occasional public and broadcast appear-



Floral tribute: Michael Foot and Fay Weldon laying a heart of roses for Salman Rushdie yesterday

is there." The Indian-born author added:

Mr Rushdie said that he had paid a high price for publishing *The Satanic Verses* - that's a high price. Three years of my life, missing it, that's an even higher price." Others have paid the ultimate price: three people have been murdered, and one was wounded in a knife attack by Muslim extremists opposed to the book.

Mr Rushdie and Marianne Wiggins, his estranged wife, fled to a secret location in February 1989, after Ayatollah Khomeini ordered the *fatwa*. Guarded by two armed special branch officers at all times, Mr Rushdie has been moved hundreds of times since.

There was no official comment from Tehran yesterday. The issue is a British one and

needs to be solved with Muslims in this country, and not Iran."

Frances de Souza, a spokesman for Mr Rushdie, said that he found the disruption to his life and friendships hard to deal with. "He finds it very difficult to cope when the matter is being swept under the carpet," she said. "There is now a huge upsurge of support around the world and we are trying to harness that in a political way."

Mr Rushdie is reported to have earned royalties of around £10 million from sales of *The Satanic Verses*. His protection has cost taxpayers an estimated £3 million. He has contributed some £250,000 towards his accommodation and protection costs.

Salman Rushdie, page 12

Maxwell bed for 'scandal suite'

Strangers to fine art flocked to an auction of the contents of Maxwell's penthouse, Alan Hamilton reports

ROBERT MAXWELL'S double bed, an object approximately the size of a small airfield, was sold for £1,400 at auction yesterday to a Dorset hotelier who intends to make it the centrepiece of a "scandal suite".

Shirley Gardner, aged 39, a former model and dancer, who described her Canford Cliff establishment as being "for discerning people" aged 35-50, also bought two further enormous beds and a quantity of Maxwell bedding when the contents of the late media tycoon's London penthouse apartment were sold at Sotheby's.

Souvenir hunters, first time buyers and other strangers to the world of fine art crowded the New Bond Street saleroom in the search of curiosities. They were easy to spot as not being the regular Sotheby's clientele; Leslie Weller, the auctioneer, had to tick them off for sitting on valuable antique furniture.

Sold at short notice, and without reserve, by the administrators of the collapsed media empire, many of the best pieces among a largely tasteless assembly of household effects failed to reach their expected prices. Mr Maxwell's 15ft Regency dining table made £20,000 instead of the ex-

Head refuses to take big pay-off

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE HEAD teacher of a London comprehensive school, which was given a month to act over unsatisfactory standards, yesterday refused to accept an early retirement package said to be worth more than £250,000.

Highbury Grove School, in Islington, north London, once regarded as the showpiece of the comprehensive system, received a damning report from inspectors last month. Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, set a deadline of February 28 for an action plan for improvements to be produced.

Peter Searl, the head teacher, has been backed by the school's governors, but has now been asked by Islington education authority to take early retirement. A package, including a £55,000 payment and pension rights of almost £20,000 a year, was said to have been approved by councillors.

Mr Searl said yesterday that he would not resign, and

Armed robber kills himself

AN ARMED robber shot and killed himself yesterday after being pursued by unarmed West Midlands police officers following a £6,000 wages raid in Birmingham. Last night police were questioning two other men who were caught after a chase (Stewart Tender writes).

The man died after two men burst into a metallic washers factory in the city centre. Two staff members were attacked and the robbers escaped in a waiting car with the cash. One of them then hijacked a van.

John Barley, managing director of the company owning the van, said: "Suddenly a gunman put his gun through the window and to [the driver's] face and demanded he got out. He was left standing on the pavement."

Unarmed police gave chase in three cars. The gunman eventually abandoned the van and turned on the pursuing police.

Aslam Amwar, working for a packaging company nearby, said: "There was a screech of brakes and sirens everywhere. There was a man running and police were chasing him. He turned and threatened them with his revolver or handgun."

Chief Superintendent Derek Williams, of West Midlands police, said that the man was taken to hospital where he was found to be dead. The two other men were captured after they had abandoned their getaway car.

Price of petrol goes up again

TEXACO and Shell yesterday announced another round of petrol price rises, increasing pump prices by 6.4p a gallon (1.4p a litre) from Monday. They blamed sterling's weakness against the dollar and a rise in refinery costs.

Other companies are expected to follow this second petrol price year.

The increase means that unleaded petrol will cost 206.4p a gallon (45.4p a litre) and 4-star 222.8p a gallon (49.0p a litre). Texaco said that market volatility was likely to continue to move petrol prices.

Rape ruling

A THREE and a half year prison sentence on a man who raped a teenage girl in her flat after she left a party was increased to six years yesterday by the appeal court. Three judges, headed by Lord Lane, the Lord Chief Justice, said that the sentence on Gareth Vaughan-Roberts, aged 27, a Baptist minister's son from Ebbw Vale, Gwent, was "far too lenient". They allowed the Attorney General's challenge.

Costly seaweed

The price of laverbread, the Welsh seaweed delicacy, could double by March 1. St David's day, because the sea where it is harvested have been unusually calm. Supplies of the food, traditionally fried with bacon for breakfast, rely on storms to clear the sand beneath which it grows. This year the seaweed has remained buried and its price is expected to rise from £1.40 to £2.80 a pound.

Murder arrest

A MAN has been arrested and charged with the rape and murder of Margaret Hopegood, a British tourist, aged 32, in Hamilton, New Zealand. The man, aged 29, was due to appear in court in Hamilton last night. The body of Miss Hopegood, a solicitor from Earls Colne, Essex, was found in public lavatories in the North Island city on January 10.

Sherry dispute

A HIGH Court judge has reserved judgment on an attempt by sherry producers to ban sales of a new drink blending Spanish and British sherries. The sherry producers complain that the labelling and marketing of Stone's Original Pale Cream, produced by Matthew Clark and Sons, of Leeds, is an attempt to confuse consumers. The company is opposing the move.

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strong with life, as the visitors promenade and shop 'till late, plan a trip to the theatre, a flutter at the Casino, or a romantic meal by the harbour.

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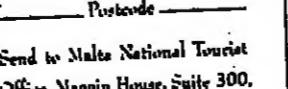
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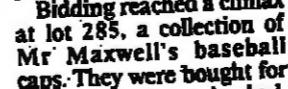
The Manoel Theatre, built in 1731

Brilliant food, brilliant view.



Republic Square

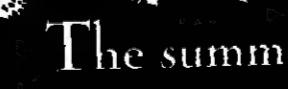
Brilliant food, brilliant view.



Grandmaster's Palace

Brilliant food, brilliant view.

Photograph, page 1



St. John's Co-Cathedral

Brilliant food, brilliant view.

Photograph, page 1



National Museum

Brilliant food, brilliant view.

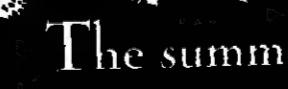
Photograph, page 1



National Library

Brilliant food, brilliant view.

Photograph, page 1



National Art Gallery

Brilliant food, brilliant view.

Photograph, page 1



National Botanical Garden

Brilliant food, brilliant view.

Photograph, page 1

Armed
robber
kills
himself

Estate agent feared death on her first night in captivity

BY CRAIG SETON

THE kidnapped estate agent Stephanie Slater believed she would die of fright on the first night of her eight days' captivity when she was blindfolded, bound and locked in a wooden box by her abductor, police said yesterday.

Miss Slater, aged 25, told detectives after her release that the box she slept in every night of the ordeal was inside a second container with a lid. At one stage the kidnapper told her that he had another container that could be used "to remove her body", but said he would get rid of it because he no longer needed it.

Detective Inspector Ellie Baker, aged 40, head of the West Midlands police team that debriefed Miss Slater, said yesterday: "Her most crucial time was her first night when she was terrified. She was bound all night and was very, very cold. That night she actually believed she would die in terror."

Further details of Miss Slater's captivity were released yesterday after a ten-day police debriefing session which began when she was released unharmed near her Birmingham home two weeks ago. The kidnapper,

who escaped with a £175,000 ransom, is believed to have abducted and murdered Julian Dart, aged 18, of Leeds, West Yorkshire, last year.

Detective Inspector Ellie Baker, aged 40, head of the West Midlands police team that debriefed Miss Slater, said yesterday: "Her most crucial time was her first night when she was terrified. She was bound all night and was very, very cold. That night she actually believed she would die in terror."

Miss Slater told detectives that a man she was showing around a house for sale in Great Barr, Birmingham, on

January 22 produced a knife in the bathroom which she tried to grab. During a struggle he pushed her into the bath and she pleaded not to be killed, telling the abductor that she was a human being.

He told her she would not be killed or harmed before tying her hands and leading her to a car parked at the rear, where she was blindfolded, gagged and placed under a blanket on the back seat.

Tom Cook, assistant chief constable of West Yorkshire, said Miss Slater was extremely frightened but decided she would do exactly as she was told and would not get upset or angry in any way.

After driving for half an hour the kidnapper forced Miss Slater to make a tape-recorded ransom demand to Shipways, her employers. Mr Cook said: "He told her she would not die if she did not cause trouble." After several more hours driving they arrived at the unknown location where she was to be held, blindfolded throughout.

She recollects entering a large building where she was seated on a chair and told to remove her clothing. She was allowed to keep her t-shirt and underwear and was given alternative clothes. The man offered her tea and provided some chips.

Mr Cook said: "He indicated she was going to be put into a form of container where she would sleep. Stephanie indicated she was placed in what she can only describe as a wooden-type box which she had. The impression was inside another container with some sort of lid. Before locking her in the container he remarked on the fact she was calm. Stephanie indicated she was not really calm but frightened to death, but it was not in her nature to scream and shout."

Mr Cook said that Miss Slater spent the night in some pain and feared she would be harmed. She awoke at 8am to the sound of a radio. The kidnapper arrived, removed her from the container and gave her breakfast, after which she was bound and left on a mattress for several hours and then fed at teatime. In the evening she was returned to the container. The routine was followed each day, when she was allowed out to eat and to do exercises.

On the fifth day Miss Slater was forced to make another tape recording. Only hours before her release, on the day the ransom was to be collected, the kidnapper returned to the building and said he had got the money. Her clothing was returned and, still blindfolded, she was driven away.

Mr Cook said: "During the journey Stephanie indicated she had been afraid the kidnapper would not return and she would not be found. He told her he had a letter in his wallet which, had he been caught or anything had happened to him, would have indicated where she was."

Peter Longman, director of the Museums and Galleries Commission, said: "It seems likely that the painting was conditionally exempted after 1982, but the National Gallery only heard of the intended sale last Friday. If sellers are not prepared to give the museums and galleries a chance to buy, it is no wonder Tim Renton is thinking about lists." He was referring to a proposal being considered by the arts minister for the government to draw up a list of heritage items which would be banned from export.

Yesterday it emerged that the painting is subject to a government scheme exempting it from inheritance tax for as long as the owner agreed not to sell. The Capital Tax Office amended the rules in 1982, obliging owners who plan to sell exempted works to give the Museums and Galleries Commission three months' notice to give museums a chance to raise the funds. It seems almost certain that the painting was exempted after 1982 and is therefore subject to the new stipulation.

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A Lady with a Squirrel and a Starling was unveiled by the auction house on Wednesday as the star lot in its April 15 sale. There were walls of dismay from Neil MacGregor, the National Gallery's director, whose purchase grant of £2.7 million precludes any chance of his buying it.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

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World Cup cricket

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Spens left in limbo after Guinness trial ends

BY PAUL WILKINSON

THE second Guinness trial was formally halted yesterday without a verdict. Roger Seelig, the former merchant banker whose mental health was diagnosed as too fragile to continue in the trial, had the case against him shelved by the legal device of a *nolle prosequi*, an order from the Attorney General effectively preventing further prosecution of the charges against him.

The Serious Fraud Office also announced at Southwark crown court that it would not proceed with the case against the other defendant, Lord Spens, aged 49, the former managing director of the merchant bank Henry Anscherer. However, no similar *nolle prosequi* order was being sought and the charges will lie on the file.

This prompted his counsel, David Hood, to seek a direction from the trial judge, Mr Justice Henry, under section 17 of the 1967 Criminal Justice Act for a formal acquittal. He claimed that the prosecution's decision entitled Lord Spens to an acquittal as if found not guilty by a jury. It would have a bearing on who paid Lord Spens's costs, which until he was granted legal aid in December 1990 had amounted to more than £400,000. The court was finally adjourned until next Friday.

Outside court Lord Spens said: "If ever there was an example of a case where the law is an ass this is it. The collapse of the trial was nothing to do with me. Mr Seelig has been discharged but I am in limbo about whether I have been acquitted or not or whether I get costs or not."

The case against the two men effectively collapsed last Tuesday when the judge discharged the jury after saying that psychiatric evidence in-

dicated that Mr Seelig, aged 47, could not cope with the strain of continuing to conduct his own defence.

Mr Seelig had denied charges of conspiracy, fraud and false accounting arising from his alleged part in Guinness's takeover battle for Distillers in 1986. Lord Spens denied conspiracy and false accounting.

Elizabeth Glaston, QC, announcing the SFO's decision, said that the effect of the *nolle prosequi* would be to stay all proceedings against Mr Seelig. Lord Spens, however, was in a different position.

Although he had had open heart surgery last summer "it is right to say that he has never sought to use his health as a reason for adjourning or delaying these proceedings", she said.

"In those circumstances the director [of the SFO] ... has had to consider whether, even though she remains satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to proceed against Lord Spens, the public interest requires him to be subjected to the rigours of a second lengthy trial. In her decision the public interest does not require such a course to be taken."

Having regard to the relatively minor part he played in the Guinness affair, "it could be regarded as unfair to him to proceed to a second trial".

■ The Bar Council last night joined the call for urgent reform of the legal system dealing with white-collar crime. Gareth Williams, QC, chairman of the council, announced that it was to set up a working party to investigate improvements. But he rejected suggestions that lay juries should be abandoned.

He said it was unacceptable for members of the public to be expected to sit on a jury for months or even years.

Act starts a storm in the port

BY JOHN YOUNG

MILLIONS of bottles of vintage wine, quietly maturing in cellars, are at risk from the latest intervention of the Nanny state. All those cobwebs and dust are a health risk, it seems regardless of the likely damage to the wine, the bottles must be brushed, polished and presented for environmental health officer's inspection, and woe betide any defaulters.

That appears to be the implication of a move by health officers in Bristol, which has long associations with the wine trade. Local merchants have been told that, under the Food Safety Act 1990, wine is a food product and subject to the same strict hygiene regulations that apply to groceries on the shelves of shops.

David Jenkins, chairman of the Wine and Spirit Association, yesterday described the move as "pure lunacy. Handling port and madeira can disturb the maturing process and adversely affect vintaging," he said.

Juliet Hawkes, of Harveys of Bristol, said: "It is a piece of bureaucratic nonsense. Dusting a vintage bottle could make it difficult to decant and awful to drink."

Bristol city council said that environmental health officers now had powers to order wine merchants to clean their bottles and cellars, but they had not yet had occasion to use them.



Do not disturb: Robin Scott-Martin with maturing bottles of port

Labour pair lose MI5 case

BY RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

A LABOUR MP and a former aide to Neil Kinnock yesterday failed to win an enquiry into whether MI5 still holds files on them. The two women challenged the failure of the Security Service Tribunal to investigate their complaint that files wrongly classifying them as communist sympathisers in the Seventies remained with MI5.

Mr Justice Kennedy ruled in the High Court that there was no case for a judicial review and that there had been no long a delay in bringing the matter to court.

Harriet Harman, Labour MP for Peckham, and Patricia Hewitt, deputy director of the Institute of Public Policy Research, argued that files opened when they worked for the National Council for Civil Liberties, were held in defiance of a 1990 ruling by the European Commission of Human Rights.

During the European proceedings the government introduced the 1989 Security Service Act and the commission held that there was therefore no need for further action to protect their rights.

The women were concerned that files on them were still being kept and complained to the Security Service Tribunal in order to safeguard privacy.

Ms Hewitt said later that she was "extremely disappointed" with the judge's decision. She added: "We will have to begin a new case under the European Convention of Human Rights in order to get protection."

Libyans to get public hearing

The two Libyans accused of the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie will appear at a public hearing before the Libyan judge investigating the case, the Libyan news agency Jamia said yesterday. The unsourced report did not say where or when the session would be held.

Abdel Basset Ali Al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Flimani are accused by Britain and the United States of involvement in the bombing, which killed 270 people. Libya has denied the charge.

On Thursday, Britain rejected Libya's response to a United Nations security council resolution urging it to co-operate in the investigation. It will consult the security council about further moves to force compliance.

Forgery charge

Andrew Thomas Bourne, aged 44, a barman, of Willesden, north London, was remanded in custody by Brent magistrates, charged with possessing forged Dutch guilders with a face value of about £57 million.

Rapist jailed

John Broom, aged 30, of Staple Hill, near Bristol, was given three life sentences by Bristol crown court for a series of sex attacks, including the rape of a girl aged 16. Nurse loses

Lissett Burritt, aged 24, a casual nurse, of Selly Oak, Birmingham, lost a sex discrimination claim against West Birmingham Health Authority after being disciplined for refusing to wear a hat on duty.

Son accused

Douglas Graham, aged 45, of Benwell, Newcastle upon Tyne, was remanded in custody by Newcastle magistrates, charged with the murder 13 years ago of his invalid father.

Safety drive

Edinburgh council is to ban men convicted of sex offences or of domestic violence from becoming taxi drivers, after a series of sex attacks in the city.

Railman died from sniffing fire extinguisher gas

A RAILWAY guard died after sniffing gas from a fire extinguisher in the guard's van, an inquest was told yesterday. Gary Clark, aged 19, was a regular drug user who had been sniffing solvents since he was 15, his girlfriend said.

Mr Clark, of Basingstoke, Hampshire, was found slumped in the guard's van as the train on which he was working pulled into Basingstoke

station in November last year. A post-mortem examination revealed that he had died from inhaling Halon 1211 gas from the extinguisher.

Virginia Mallard, who was living with him at the time of his death, said that they regularly smoked cannabis and took LSD tablets. She said that Mr Clark had confessed to her a fortnight before his death that he abused solvents. She told the inquest

at Basingstoke: "I asked what kind of products he was using and he just said 'Everything'." He said that he had been doing it for a long time.

Mr Clark was found by Alan Oliver, a leading railman, of South Ham, Basingstoke, who had taken a Red Star parcel to the guard's van. He said: "Gary was wrapped around the radiator and I thought he was sleeping. I tried to shake him and got no answer. I saw spots of blood on his forehead." He called an ambulance but the crew was unable to revive Mr Clark.

Brian Perkins, a coroner's officer, later searched Mr Clark's home and found a key for opening fire extinguishers. Andrew Bradley, North East Hampshire coroner, recorded a verdict of death due to non-dependent abuse of drugs.

Even if you think pizzicato is an Italian takeaway, you'll still enjoy the BBC Young Musician of the Year Competition.

You don't need to be a curator at the V&A to enjoy the Antiques Road Show. Nor do you need to have Mensa membership in order to watch Mastermind.

And the same applies to Britain's premier musical event for talented young people, which once again is sponsored by Lloyds Bank.

The seventeen-programme series starts this evening at 6.50pm on BBC 2.

Who knows, by the Grand Final on April 11th you may well end up realising that a cor anglais doesn't have pips in it.



FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14

our
lose
case

Libyans
get pub
hearin

Forgery

Rapist jail

Nurse loses

gas
Son accused

Safety drive

U'11

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Lo

ads
ink

Global Warming. How much of the responsibility rests at your door?



None, you may think. In fact, each of us contributes to Global Warming in dozens of small ways.

Every time we flick on a light switch we draw electricity from the grid. Most of that electricity is made by burning fossil fuels - coal, oil or gas. Whenever we turn up the gas under a saucepan, we are burning a fossil fuel.

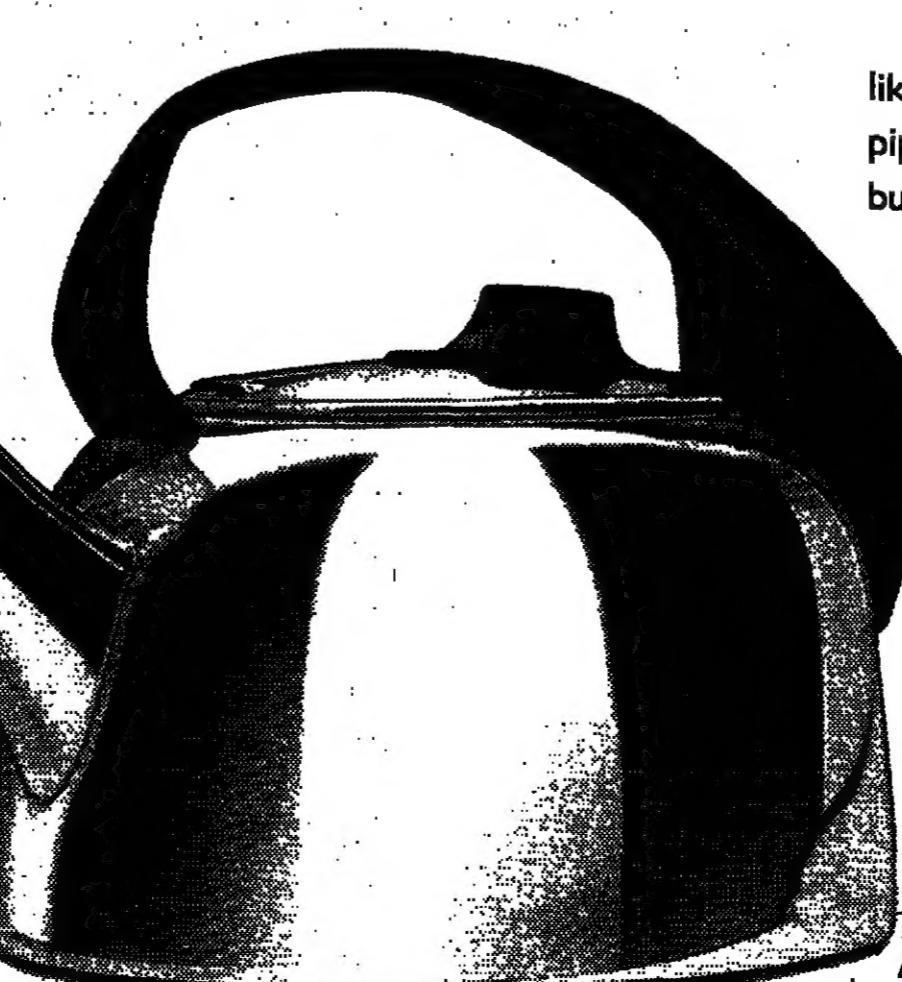
This results in the release of carbon dioxide (CO_2) into the atmosphere.

Human activity is pouring CO_2 and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere at an unprecedented rate, which is likely to lead to general warming and other changes to the world's climate.

Why should we worry about Global Warming? If it means longer, hotter summers and shorter winters, isn't it to be welcomed?

Unfortunately, not all of the effects are likely to be pleasant. If left unchecked Global Warming could change existing weather patterns across the world.

Rising sea levels will pose a serious threat



to low-lying areas. The speed with which these changes will take place may result in species being unable to cope and dying out altogether.

Faced with the possibility of such serious worldwide effects, what can be done to help?

The answer is, a very great deal.

The world's Governments are taking

Global Warming very seriously. The UK Government is taking a leading role in negotiating the global agreement on climate change due to be signed during the Earth Summit this year.

The Government will make sure the necessary action is taken within the UK. And you can do a great deal too. Starting now.

It may seem surprising but about one third of the electricity produced in our power stations is used in our homes.

Businesses, industry and transport all need to be more energy efficient and this is being tackled too. But, it is actually in our homes that each of us can make our greatest contribution to energy efficiency.

By making relatively straightforward changes in the way we use energy, it's estimated that we could cut domestic fuel bills by 20% or more, with a corresponding drop in the amount of CO_2 produced.

Obvious practical action includes things like insulating cavity walls, lagging the loft and pipes, draught-proofing doors and windows and buying modern energy-efficient appliances.

But there are also lots of simpler things like not overfilling the kettle - you only heat the water you actually need.

For more details about how to make your home more energy efficient, please telephone 0345 247 347, for only the cost of a local call.

Or complete the coupon and send it to: Helping the Earth Begins at Home, P.O. Box 200 Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 9ZZ.

For a free information pack, please telephone 0345 247 347, for only the cost of a local call, or send this coupon to: Helping the Earth Begins at Home, P.O. Box 200, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 9ZZ.

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Help Variety Club and help yourself to a 20% discount.

Wear your 'Gold Heart' in Texas between now and 9pm Tuesday and you will qualify for a special 20% discount at the checkout on anything* you buy. And remember with the Texas Sale now in full swing this will mean a double saving on hundreds of items.



Valentine's weekend is a time to show you care. Show you care for Variety Club by buying their special 'Gold Heart' from Texas (minimum donation £1). Every penny you spend on a 'Gold Heart' will go directly to the many Children's Hospitals supported by Variety Club.

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TEXAS

Ending of safety net puts ministers at risk

Poll tax threatens marginals

By DOUGLAS BROOM
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CORRESPONDENT

THE poll tax is likely to be an important factor in more than two dozen Conservative marginal seats, including four held by government ministers: according to a new analysis of official figures.

The phasing out of safety net grants to councils worst hit by the change from the rates to the community charge will lead to rises of up to £25 a head in the poll tax or cuts of up to £8 million in services. Councils covering Tory marginals will be among the worst hit by the change, according to analysis of government grant figures carried out by the Labour party.

In York, where Conal Gregory has the smallest Conservative majority anywhere at 147 votes, the Labour council will be forced to increase the poll tax by £25 or make cuts of £2 million. The Labour London borough of Southwark, which includes Gerald Bowden's Dulwich constituency (majority 180) will lose £3.7 million.

Ministers affected by the change include David Mellor, chief secretary to the Treasury and MP for Lewisham West.

At Middlesbrough council,

Majority	Local Authority	Grant reduced £m	£ saved on poll tax
147	York (Lab)	2.0	25
180	Southwark (Lab)	3.7	25
774	Middlesbrough (Lab)	1.5	15
857	Wandsworth (Con)	5.6	25
1,882	Kirklees (Lab)	7.3	25
1,677	Kirklees (Lab)	7.8	25
2,220	Hyndburn (Lab)	1.1	25
2,407	Lambeth (Lab)	0.4	2
2,583	Tynemouth (Lab)	2.4	18
2,698	Pendle (Lab)	1.6	25
3,772	Lewisham West (Lab)	4.2	25
3,927	Barrow & Furness (Lab)	1.5	25
4,493	Ashfield (Lab)	2.1	25
4,614	Lewisham (Lab)	4.2	25
4,982	Rossendale (Lab)	1.2	25
5,603	Bradford (Lab)	8.1	25
5,965	Hillingdon (Con)	3.0	17
6,045	Calderdale (Lab)	3.7	25

Source: DfE and the Labour party

lion in grant, equivalent to £25 a head on the poll tax.

At Middlesbrough council, which covers the Stockton South seat of Tim Devlin (majority 774), councillors will have to cope with the loss of £1.5 million by making cuts in services or adding up to £15 to the poll tax.

Ministers affected by the change include David Mellor, chief secretary to the Treasury and MP for Lewisham West.

Only in Mr Mellor's case

will local poll tax payers escape unscathed. Wandsworth council, which will lose £5.6 million in reduced

ney, John Maples, financial secretary to the Treasury and MP for Lewisham West.

David Trippier, junior environment minister and MP for Rossendale and Darwen, and Colin Moynihan, junior energy minister and MP for Lewisham East.

Only in Mr Mellor's case

will local poll tax payers escape unscathed. Wandsworth council, which will lose £5.6 million in reduced

Decimal coinage comes of age

Louise Hildago celebrates a 21st birthday but finds nostalgia for the bob and tanner still has currency

THE decimal coin is 21 years old today. On February 15, 1971, the currency replaced pounds, shillings and pence amid dire warnings of raging inflation and "decimal disorders". Traditionalists grumbled about the demise of a system that traced its ancestry to the solars and denarii introduced by the Roman emperor Diocletian in 296.

The late Ian MacLennan, the Conservative shadow chancellor in 1969, led a spirited crusade against the act, declaring himself an "unrepentant ten-bobber".

Other opponents warned that prices would rise in the first year as shopkeepers rounded them up. The fears were proved largely unfounded in the year before decimalisation the retail price index rose 8.6 per cent and by only 8 per cent the year after.

The Treasury estimated that the changeover cost between £100 million and £150 million. To make the hundred of millions of decimal coins needed for D-Day, the Royal Mint moved from its



Countdown: pre-decimal children learn to change

ancient home near the Tower of London to larger premises in Llantrisant, Mid Glamorgan, from where it still issues the country's coinage.

There are still those nostalgic for the language of cop-

pers, tanners and bobs. In a letter to *The Times* two months ago, Professor Peter King bemoaned the "Napoleonic tyranny of decimalisation". The King's Head public house in Islington, north London, refuses to serve those using the decimal terminology and insists on asking £1 1½ for a pint of bitter.

The former borin, whose face value is now 10p, is the only coin still minted at the same size and weight as its pre-decimal form. When it was withdrawn later this year, the hope of coming out of the supermarket with an antique in one's change will finally be extinguished.

Alan Parker's film *The Commitments* has six nominations and the *Silence of the Lambs* nine, including Anthony Hopkins as best actor and Jodie Foster as best actress. Kevin Costner's Oscar-winning *Dances with Wolves* is nominated among best films and Costner is nominated for the David Lean award for best direction. The ceremony is on March 22.

Darlings snubbed in British Oscars

THE popular television series *Darling Buds of May* has failed to win any nominations for Britain's "Oscars" — the British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards.

Comedy nominations, announced yesterday, are *The Curse of Mr Bean*, *Drop the Dead Donkey*, *One Foot in the Grave* and *Only Fools and Horses*. *Poirot*, *Inspector Morse*, *Spender* and *Casualty* are nominated for best drama series, and *GBH*, *Coronation Street*, *Clarissa* and *Prime Suspect* for best drama serial.

Best light entertainment nominations go to *Have I Got News for You*, *Julie Walters and Friends*, *Spitting Image* and *Whose Line is it Anyway?*

The *Darling Buds* stars David Jason, Pam Ferris, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Philip Franks, who together received the Variety Club TV personality of the year award last week, also failed to receive any nominations.

Alan Bleasdale's controversial series *GBH*, about corruption in a northern council, wins a number of nominations, including best actor for Robert Lindsay and Michael Palin, best actress for Lindsay Duncan and best theme for Elvis Costello. Patricia Routledge wins a best light entertainment performance nomination for suburban snob Hyacinth Bucket in *Keeping Up Appearances*, while *A Question of Attribution*, about the art historian and spy Anthony Blunt, is in the best single drama category.

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EC and Efta settle legal powers split to salvage trade deal

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

NEGOTIATORS last night stitched back together the agreement to create a frontier-free single market of 19 European states which faltered last December in the face of objections by the European Court. Officials of the EC and Efta (the European Free Trade Association) announced that they had overcome the difficulties raised by the judges.

One official said last night that talks had come to a successful end, but the amended draft treaty faces several hurdles before it can come into force at the beginning of next year. Late on Thursday, the European parliament voted to ask the European Commission to send the treaty back to the court for an opinion and threatened to block ratification if the request was ignored. The full Commission and council of foreign ministers will need to endorse the compromise.

Besides the European par-

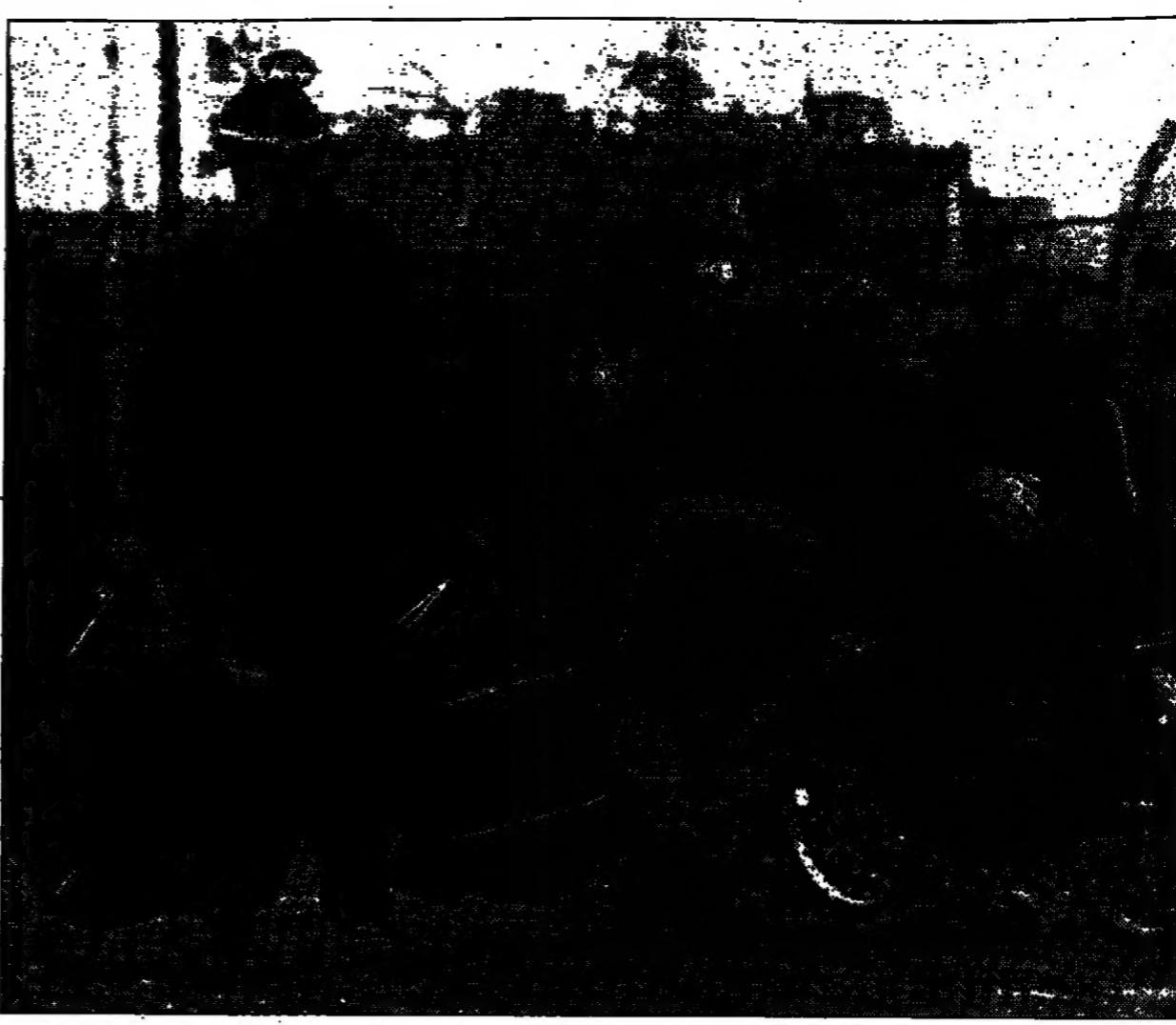
liament, the 19 national governments need to ratify the treaty. The Swiss government's stance on the latest compromise was not known last night, but the Swiss have been throughout the talks the most reluctant of the Efta states to make concessions to EC demands. Last night's deal leaves the legal system for the planned single market largely in EC hands.

The treaty aims to create a "European economic area" of the 12 EC and seven Efta countries (Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) by removing all trade barriers. If the agreement is ratified, Efta's 37 million citizens would join the EC single market in 1993 but stay outside the Community's political machinery. Most Efta governments see the arrangement as an interim one and want full EC membership in the mid-1990s.

Both Efta and European

Commission negotiators would prefer the amended treaty not to be sent back to the EC court for a formal opinion, since they are not legally obliged to ask the judges' opinion again. Informal contacts between the Commission and the court are likely to continue, but such soundings did not prevent the court from stopping the treaty in its tracks last Christmas.

Yesterday's breakthrough is understood to have turned on a formula which balances the powers of the legal systems in the EC and Efta. Under the broad agreement, the European Court would continue to police all trade rules which it presently supervises and all commercial disputes covering the entire new zone. An Efta court would adjudicate cases concerning Efta states alone. A three-man arbitration committee would oversee the settling of borderline disputes.



Wheels of fortune: Russian merchant seamen, on shore leave in Rotterdam, returning to their ship loaded up with old car tyres which they can sell back home for large profits. Such sights are becoming common

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Gibraltar seeks end to colony status

By DOMINIQUE SEARLE
IN GIBRALTAR
AND MICHAEL BINION

SIX days before arriving in London for talks with the government and opposition, Joe Bossano, the chief minister of Gibraltar, told the opening session of the colony's parliament that it wants to change its constitution and shed its colonial status.

He proposed transferring responsibility for Gibraltar's defence and foreign affairs to the European Community, leaving Britain to retain formal sovereignty over the Rock which otherwise would be largely self-governing.

His comments, which are certain to stir controversy in Madrid, appeared in London last night to be an attempt to get around the provision in the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, under which the Rock was ceded in perpetuity to Britain on the basis that Spain would have the first option to have it back if Britain left.

Mr Bossano said Gibraltar was seeking reform of its 1969 constitution with the aim of decolonising within the next four years. He stopped short of calling for independence, but told the House of Assembly to applaud: "The time has come for Gibraltar to be seen as a territory whose people are fully entitled to the right of self-determination. We reject entirely the argument that an 18th-century treaty can limit or inhibit the right of a European people to exercise self-determination when that right is denied to another single human being."

Britain reacted coolly to his remarks. The Foreign Office noted that Gibraltar's status in the European Community is determined by Article 227a in the Treaty of Rome covering "territories for whose external affairs member states are responsible". It said independence was not an option unless Spain was willing to agree. During talks with Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, on Thursday, Britain will be "ready to listen but there was no question of formal constitutional talks".

Mr Bossano said the Gibraltar parliament should "play the historic role of ushering in the end of the colonial era in our history". He has never made clear how Brussels, which has no department responsible for the foreign affairs or defence of member states, could take on responsibility for Gibraltar.

Since 1985, Spain has been able to raise the issue of its sovereignty claim at annual talks between foreign ministers held under the so-called "Brussels process". Madrid argues that decolonisation should involve the reintegration of Gibraltar into Spain.

Honecker can go to hospital

FROM IAN MURRAY
IN BONN

THE German government has agreed to allow Erich Honecker to be moved to a hospital in Moscow to be treated for possible liver cancer and depression, provided an independent medical examination confirms that he needs the treatment.

The foreign ministry in Bonn confirmed yesterday that while any treatment was underway no moves would be made to arrest the former East German leader and extradite him to Germany, where he is wanted on manslaughter charges.

Herr Honecker has been living in the sanctuary of the Chilean ambassador's residence in Moscow since December. Yesterday, the Chilean and Russian ambassadors in Bonn were told that, although any necessary treatment could go ahead at the hospital, Germany was still insisting that Herr Honecker should be extradited.

The German ambassador in Moscow has asked the government there to ensure that the report of Herr Honecker's ill health is not used as a way of trying to smuggle him out of the country. To guard against that, Germany wants a fresh check made on the findings of the three Russian doctors who have examined him.

Taxmen stalk East's new millionaires

BY ROGER BOYES, EAST EUROPE CORRESPONDENT

MILLIONAIRES of the East, unite! You have nothing to lose but your Mercedes coupés, your Jacuzzis and private jets. The Eastern European market revolution may have been slow taking off, but a few hundred entrepreneurs have managed, by hook or by crook, to accumulate fortunes in the past two years. Now, the taxman, another Western innovation, is knocking at the door.

As a result, some millionaires have disappeared abroad, while others are taking an intense interest in tax write-off charities. Luxembourg and Liechtenstein have suddenly become attractive destinations for short winter holidays. Top businessmen's clubs have been opened in all of the East European capitals, ostensibly to discuss investment opportunities and "networks", but in fact to work out tax dodges.

The problem seems most acute in Russia, where the government is desperate to soak up hard currency. Parliament has drafted changes to article 153 of the old penal code which allowed for stiff jail sentences on profiteers. But it seems that President Yeltsin is not going to allow businessmen to slip by unscathed. One decree being prepared proposes taxes of up to 90 per cent on private companies whose income exceeds a feeble 35,000 roubles (barely £200 at today's rates) a month.

That will hit men such as Herman Sterligov, aged 25, a Muscovite who made his first \$1 million in January

last year. He took out a loan for two million roubles, rented office space and organised an agency dealing in building materials. Thousands of Muscovites turned up to buy and sell.

Mr Sterligov charged 10 per cent on every deal and the profits were ploughed back into the agency. Now, his company has a network of such agencies that trade in everything except food.

He and his brothers now charge for brokers' office space on his exchange – a Western broker typically has to pay him \$200,000 for the right to trade – and a fee of 0.3 per cent on every deal transacted. His wife and child live mainly in New York. They have a big flat in London and a more modest place in Moscow.

The nervousness of East European millionaires is not just about taxes as such, but also about the possibility of an egalitarian backlash that could push the tax collector, and the public prosecutor, into action.

There is still a great deal of mystery, not only about the source of some fortunes – a typical biography sees the lucky man disappearing in America or elsewhere in the West for two years in the 1980s and returning with a big pile of start-up capital – but also the way they are being controlled. The richest entrepreneur in Bulgaria is probably Valentin Movov, aged 40, who owns several companies and Western dealerships. The tax authorities spent two months going through his books, but little has been heard since.

Gibraltar
seeks
to color
status

Uzbeks greet girlie mags and meatballs

FROM ANDREW FINKEL IN TASHKENT

AMERICAN officials on Tashkent airfield, supervising the unloading of a mixed cargo which included antibiotics and institution-size, oven-ready cartons of spaghetti and meatballs, acknowledged that they were providing no more than a gesture of goodwill to the people of the new state of Uzbekistan.

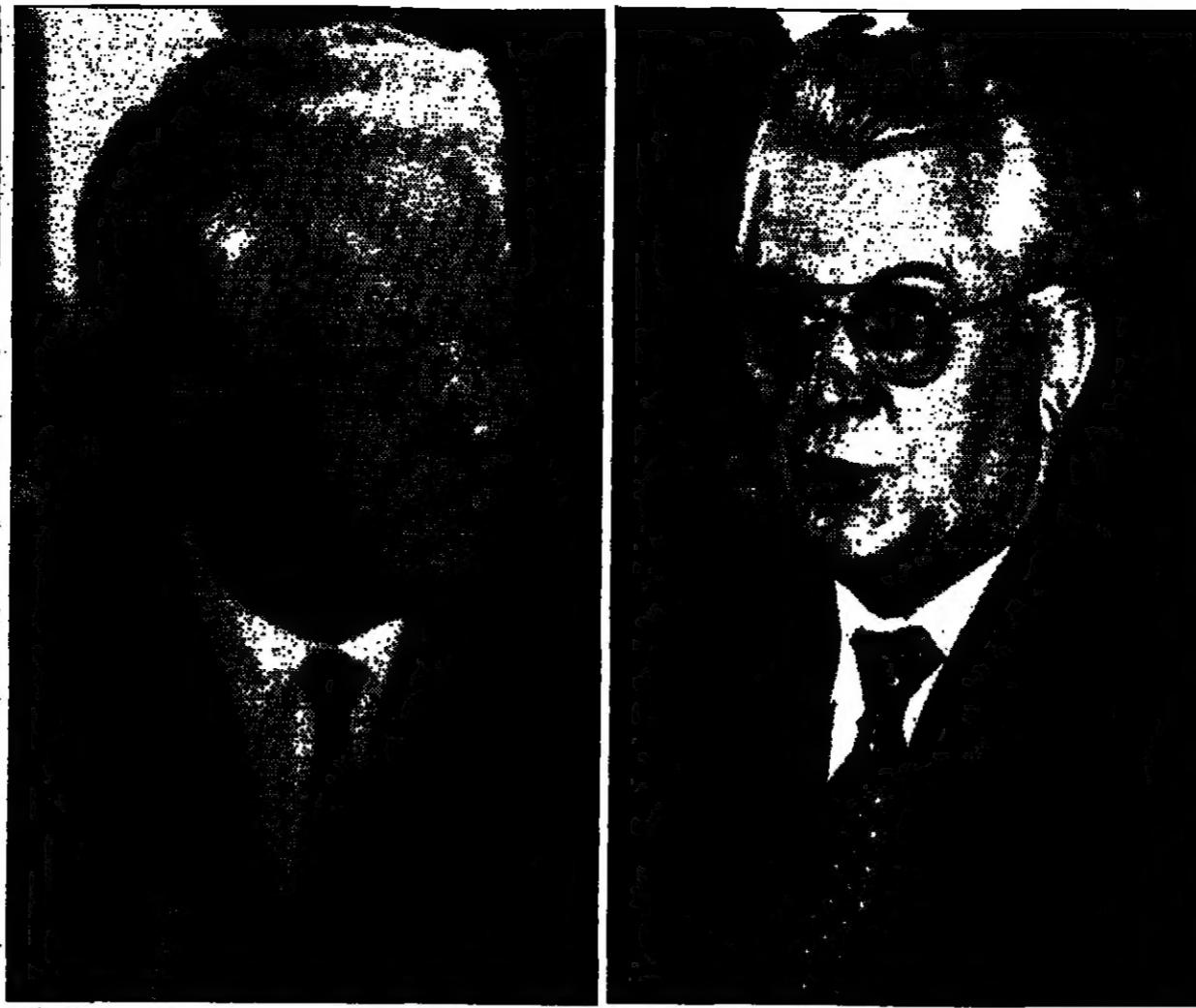
Local journalists assembled to meet the airdrop also said that there was no food disaster in Tashkent, but took the point that the gift was further recognition of their independence and were impressed that the aircraft had arrived directly from Moscow but from Ankara.

Most of the meals, left-over rations from Desert Shield with their shelf lives running out, are intended for orphans, hospitals and old people's homes, according to Lieutenant-Commander James Leahy. His team's normal job is to carry out on-site inspection of nuclear weapons, but now, thanks to a knowledge of Russian, they are in Uzbekistan to ensure that Operation Provide Hope does not become an operation to supply the black market.

An American naval attaché was also on hand at the airport to claim delivery of a suitcase full of dollar bills designed to ease the way of a separate State Department delegation wandering through the newly independent states to look out for sites for new embassies.

There were other signs that free trade was catching on quickly. A Moscow-born KGB border guard, standing watch at the entrance hatch of the American C141 military cargo aircraft, was one of

Leading article, page 13



Military manoeuvres: President Yeltsin of Russia, left, and President Kravchuk of Ukraine, who clashed at yesterday's Minsk meeting on the future of the former Soviet Union's armed forces. Hopes fade, page 1

Costs threaten press freedom in Russia

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

AS MOSCOW'S journalists gathered last night for a grand charity ball, the festive mood was marred by the prospect of mass unemployment. Virtually all the best-known titles of the former Soviet press say they are days away from financial collapse.

Skyrocketing costs have created a climate of wild uncertainty in a country where everything about newspapers used to be predictable, from their ideological content and dreary appearance to their negligible price. According to Pavel Gusev, president of the journalists' union in Moscow, only President Yeltsin can stop the presses of Russia's main publications from coming to a stop soon.

Pravda, one of the very few newspapers to publish on Mondays, said this week that it would, in the interests of economy, no longer come out on Thursdays. The problem for dailies like *Pravda*, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, and *Sovetskaya Rossiya* is that 90 per cent of the copies they sell are delivered to subscribers who pay annually in advance.

When subscription prices for 1992 were calculated last autumn, it was assumed that newsprint would cost up to 4,000 roubles (about £20 at the current market rate) a ton. This seemed a generous assumption, as the price was 800 roubles a ton a year ago. But newsprint is already sell-

ing on Moscow's new commodity exchanges for 20,000 roubles a ton, while the government struggles to keep it below 12,000 roubles within what remains of the state distribution system.

As the price of almost everything, including labour, spirals upwards, the newspapers worst hit are those whose readership tops ten million, notably the trade union newspaper *Trud* and *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, the popular youth daily. "The more readers you have, the worse your situation," Mr Gusev said.

In the spot that used to indicate a cover price of a few kopeks (a fraction of a penny), many newspapers now say "retail price negotiable". Hundreds of people queue at printing presses every morning for piles of papers to hawk for whatever they can get.

Komsomolskaya Pravda said this week that Russia and its fellow republics were on the brink of an "information catastrophe" that could ruin the chances of reform and even the existence of the new Commonwealth. Everyone's worst fear is that something akin to the bad old Communist monopoly over printing presses and distribution will be re-established and subsidies confined to papers that adhere loyally to the government line.

Tabloid bid, page 10

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Croats killed in truce violations

FROM TIM JUDAH IN BELGRADE

CROAT and Yugoslav military delegations were scheduled to meet yesterday to discuss several serious ceasefire breaches in which at least three Croats were reported to have died. Police in Osijek, the eastern Croatian regional capital, said two people died when a shell hit their car on Thursday and the Croatian news agency reported an artillery attack near the Adriatic port of Zadar.

Mr Simic said he hoped that after a peacekeeping force had arrived Cyrus Vance, the UN special envoy, would preside over the new peace talks. Lord Carrington's mediation had failed, he said, adding that Serbia's "greatest mistake" had been to believe that the European Community would respect international law.

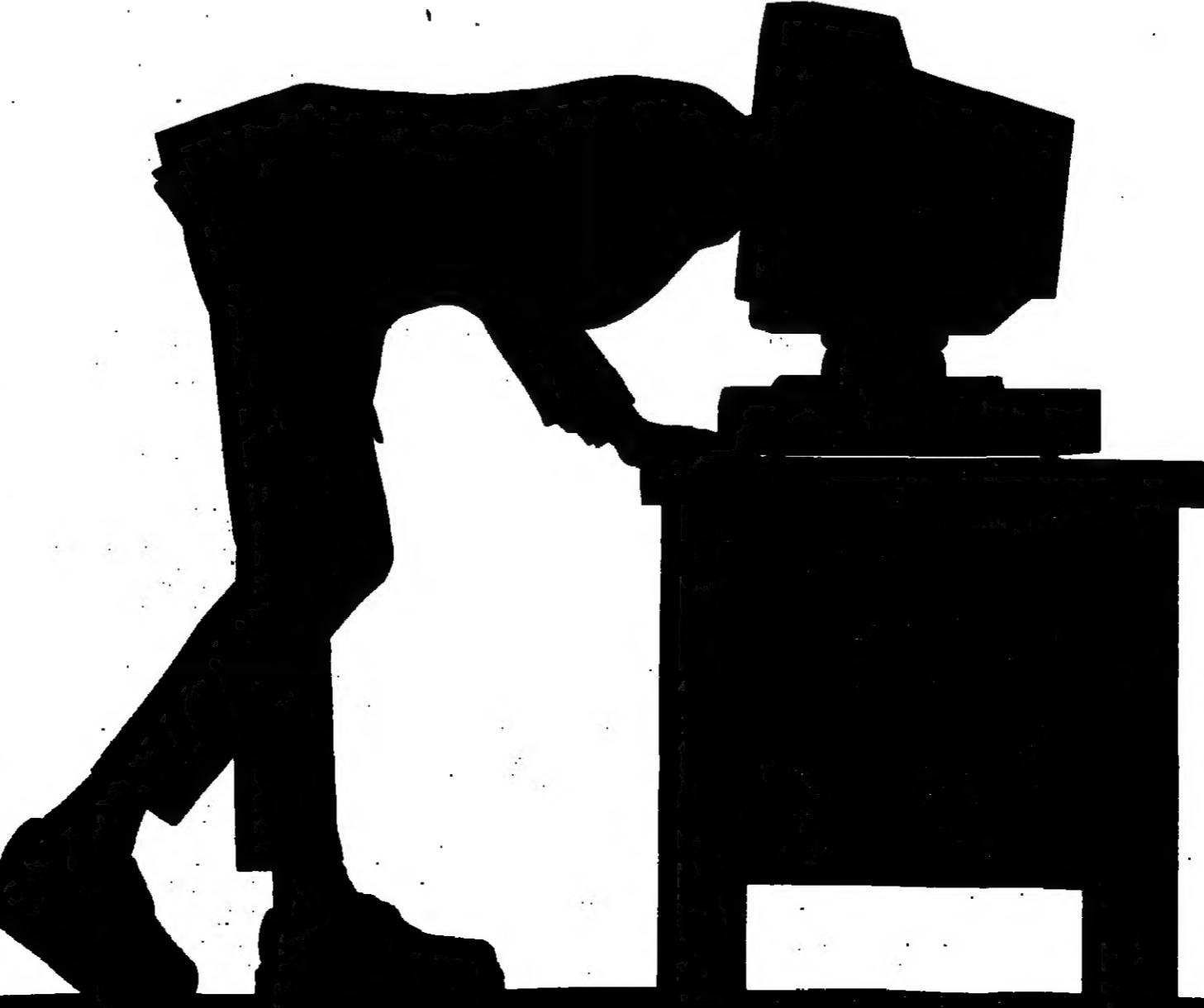
He confirmed that Belgrade still hoped to construct a new Yugoslavia comprising Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, he said that unless Bosnian Muslims, who make up 44 per cent of the population of the ethnically mixed republic, came to an agreement with Belgrade, Serbia and Croatia might move to partition it.

week and underline the fragility of the truce. While Belgrade has unreservedly welcomed the secretary-general's recommendation, the Serbian press and government officials repeatedly give warnings that Croatia is arming fast. "Obviously they are preparing for war," said Zeljko Simic, a senior aide to Slobodan Milosevic, the president of Serbia.

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Race for the White House

Election stirs US neurosis on Vietnam

FROM PETER STOTHARD, US EDITOR, IN WASHINGTON

THE unfinished business of the Vietnam war was supposed to have been ended last year by the military triumphs of the Gulf. For the American armed forces that was true: the veterans of Lai Kay and Long Binh could hold their heads high at last.

But for politicians such as Bill Clinton, among the Democratic runners, it was not true. Those who did not serve their country in the 1960s but who do want to serve it now face a hard time, maybe even harder because of the Gulf. Mr Clinton is spending the last days of his election primary campaign trying to shore up support that has been collapsing since the first revelations emerged of his efforts to avoid the Vietnam war draft in 1969.

Almost everyone who has written about this affair (and few political commentators have not written about it) preface their remarks with the warning that Mr Clinton, the Arkansas governor, was doing no more than millions of other students whose lives in the late 1960s were dominated by the war. Indeed, his behaviour in maximising his opportunity to avoid being drafted was, by common consent, more honourable than that of those people who fled the draft and the country altogether.

Since he was then and is now an aggressive opponent of that Southeast Asia policy, his stance was arguably more honourable than that of Vice-President Dan Quayle who supported (and still supports) the policy but did not want to go and fight for it.

The cautionary notes have not helped Mr Clinton, however. He has become the conduit for all the suppressed fears and guilts of those who stayed away from Vietnam because their class, their education, their contacts or even their simple good luck kept them out of harm's way.

Many of the most sensitive are Mr Clinton's contemporaries in the press corps. On the day that the "draft evasion" story first appeared in

In a political hotbed, Saturday Review, page 16

The Wall Street Journal, I was with the Clinton campaign in the foyer of the mock-Tudor Tara Hotel in Nashua, New Hampshire. Reporters crushed around him firing questions about 1A and 1D status, putting detailed challenges to him about dates and deferment rules.

They were talking about their own lives. None of them may have governed a state, or tried to reform a school system or even had the active extra-marital social life of which the governor has been accused. But they felt the heat of this issue as though it were a big cat breathing down their necks.

Mr Clinton answered the questions well. He has stood up courageously to attempts to suggest that he somehow falsified his record, that it was not a "Vietnam question" but a "character question" like that of his alleged misrepresentation of his relationship with Jennifer Flowers. But it is hard to stand up against a current that is flowing so fast.

Two of his opponents, whom he had hitherto clearly beaten in the political argument, quickly claimed the patriotic card for their own. Senator Bob Kerrey, the most authentic war hero in the American presidential race this century, clearly did not relish the idea of wrapping himself in the flag. But he did it all the same.

Senator Tom Harkin, a veteran pilot, hit the tenderest spot of all: the clarifying truth that Mr Clinton had lost his greatest asset, his electability. No party wants to saddle itself with a scapegoat, however much its members may believe that the charges are unfair.

Twice in the past, after the civil war and after the second world war, military service has been a long-lasting test for presidential hopefuls. George Bush's war record was vital for him. So was John Kennedy's and Lyndon Johnson's.



Hot reception: Michael Jackson, the American rock singer, with Ivory Coast children on arriving in Abidjan for a visit yesterday. He cancelled engagements and stayed in his hotel as students were arrested in the capital during violent protests against the government

New Hampshire chokes on forced diet of TV politics

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

NEW Hampshire's couch potatoes can no longer return from work to a mindless evening of soaps, serials and old B-movies. With less than 100 hours left of the nation's pulsating first primary, the airwaves are saturated by grandiloquent politicians pounding one another and proclaiming that they alone can restore greatness to America.

Here, in a state uniquely empowered to buy or give birth to politicians' dreams, the punch-drunk candidates are now spending tens of thousands of dollars daily on frantic last-ditch pleading. WMUR, New Hampshire's main station, is carrying 160 political advertisements a day, each replete with stirring music, ubiquitous Stars

and Stripes, and shameless hyperbole.

Roundabout by Patrick Buchanan, the right-wing columnist, President Bush typically appears 29 times a day on the station to appeal for Republican unity so he can "lead America to prosperity". With one poll yesterday giving Mr Bush a lead of only 17 points, the White House may well resort to advertisements focusing on Mr Buchanan's opposition to the Gulf war.

Mr Bush barely fades from the screen before Mr Buchanan appears, berating the president for three years of indifference to New Hampshire's suffering. "Together," says the fired-up conservative insurgent, "you and I can take back America and make it great again."

Democrat hopes of a painless primary that would unite the party behind their draftsy governor have really vanished. Bill Clinton, Vietnam's latest victim, films feverishly to stanch his haemorrhaging support. Arkansas citizens tell their New Hampshire counterparts what an upstanding man their governor is, while a Vietnam veteran says Mr Clinton has been "ambushed by an enemy almost as invisible as the Vietcong were".

Bob Kerrey's ninth new advertisement of the primary targets Mr Clinton by flaunting his own heroic Vietnam record and unimpeachable patriotism. Paul Tsongas, the new front-runner, ploughs up and down a whispering pool to counter a whispering campaign about whether he has conquered cancer. Tom Harkin, the working-class champ, claims all Democrats apart from him are neo-Republicans.

Commercial no longer interrupt the programmes; programmes punctuate the commercials. A Clinton sales pitch that lasted 30 minutes was immediately followed by a 30-minute commercial for Lyndon LaRouche, a fringe candidate who is in prison for fraud. Jerry Brown, former governor of California, periodically airs half-hour "infomercials" attacking political corruption.

By early this week the main candidates had spent well over \$3 million (£1.6 million) on advertising in New Hampshire, and that figure could double or triple by Tuesday. Saturated viewers are beginning to yearn for good old Burger King advertisements, but Mr Clinton will this weekend distribute 20,000 ten-minute videos to ram home his message.

Rival bidding for New York tabloid

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN NEW YORK

IN A move that caught New York's business world by surprise, Peter Kalikow, the bankrupt owner of the *New York Post*, has announced plans to bid for *The New York Daily News*, the ailing rival tabloid, which was taken over by Robert Maxwell months before he died.

Mr Kalikow, a property developer who bought the *Post* from the News Corporation four years ago, said he was making the move because combining the two newspapers was "the surest, and perhaps only opportunity for the *Daily News*' survival". The *News*, which has fought bitter circulation wars with the *Post* for years, reacted coolly to Mr Kalikow's overture, suggesting that he join the queue of potential buyers. He was not, it pointed out, on the list of qualified investors who received prospectuses last week. News employees said on the television news that they resented the idea.

Mr Kalikow's approach was unexpected because he had placed himself in personal bankruptcy last year, after the stump in the value of his property holdings. However, Mr Kalikow's creditors could conceivably support a deal because the *Post* is likely to lose its value should the *News* be bought by someone else and survive. *The New York Times* reported that it already had the backing of the Bankers' Trust Company — his main creditor — and that Mr Kalikow expects to make a cash offer of about \$50 million (£28.2 million).

Maxwell bought the *News* in a last-minute bid last

March, days before its owners were due to close it as a hopeless loss-maker. It sought protection under bankruptcy law from its creditors after Maxwell's death, declaring \$53 million in liabilities and \$37 million in assets.

Each newspaper has been struggling to survive in a market which most experts say is not big enough to sustain four big daily newspapers — *The New York Times*, the *Post*, the *News* and *New York Newsday*. Mr Kalikow's spokesman said he would not close the *Post* if he acquired the *News*, but all other options were open, including the possibility of relaunching it as the afternoon paper it once was. He might, for example, combine editorial or business operations while keeping the titles separate.

The *News* said in a statement that Mr Kalikow might not be a qualified potential investor. The *Daily News'* investment bankers, Salomon Brothers, recently mailed a package of financial information about the newspaper to a handful of prospective buyers. "Salomon would be happy to conduct a detailed review of Mr Kalikow's financial condition prior to releasing any information about the *News*," the *News* said.

Other potential buyers include Mortimer Zuckerman, another property entrepreneur and owner of the *US News & World Report*, and Conrad Black, who controls Hollinger of Vancouver, the owner of 96 daily papers, including *The Daily Telegraph*.

Islamic march stopped

Algeria: The fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front yesterday called off its planned march through Algiers after riot police and heavily armed troops were deployed around the capital (Alfred Hermida writes). In the central area, paratroopers took up positions around the Place des Martyrs, where the marchers had intended to gather.

There have been further attacks by Islamic extremists on the security forces in Algeria, but cancellation of the march avoided a large-scale showdown. Throughout the day police vans patrolled the area, with automatic rifles pointing out of windows. Plain-clothes officers armed with light sub-machine guns took up positions in shop doorways.

The heavy security presence did not altogether deter attacks on the security forces, however. A group of Islamic extremists attacked a police station on the edge of the old quarter, the kasbah, injuring several police officers.

Talks resume

Port-au-Prince: After more than three weeks' debate, the Haitian senate agreed to resume talks with the ousted president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, aimed at solving the dispute over the country's leadership. (Reuters)

Lock accused

Perth: Tony Lock, aged 62, the former England cricketer, appeared before magistrates at Perth, Western Australia, charged with aggravated indecent assault in 1987 on a girl aged 15. He was remanded until next month. (AP)

Mother land

Resay: An Iranian who has lived in limbo for nearly three years at Charles de Gaulle airport near Paris can enter Britain to look for his mother after gaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention, his lawyer said. (AP)

Animal passion

San Francisco: The zoo here offered St. Valentine's day tours to people wanting to learn animals' sexual habits. Guides pointed out, among other animals, lebanese geese and monkeys fitted with contraceptive devices. (Reuters)

Dying wish

Ottawa: A Quebec woman identified as Nancy B. died after being disconnected from a respirator in accordance with her wishes. She had been paralysed for two and a half years with a rare neurological disorder.

Love match

Adelaide: The Art Gallery of South Australia made a St Valentine's day announcement that it had bought an aluminium cast of Eros, the statue in Piccadilly Circus, London, for £180,000 to go on permanent display. (AP)

Miners killed

Johannesburg: Four miners were killed and four others were injured in an earth tremor at the Western Deep Levels South goldmine, near Carltonville.

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Tokyo scandal prosecutors arrest company chiefs

FROM PETER STARR IN TOKYO

JAPANESE prosecutors yesterday arrested four businessmen allegedly involved in a new scandal, as politicians failed to agree on how to summon members of the ruling Liberal Democratic party linked to another scandal.

The arrests came a day after raids on the homes of former executives of Sagawa Kyubin, the parcel delivery group. Companies allegedly received loans from the group and the offices of Inagawa-kai, Japan's second-biggest gangster outfit.

Two of the arrested men, Hiroyasu Watanabe, the former president of Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin, and Jun Saotome, the company's former managing director, are suspected of breaching company trust. They allegedly extended 110 billion yen (£490 million) in suspect loans and guarantees to the Heiwado property group and the Ichihara Resort Development Company, as well as Inagawa-kai and its affiliates. Yasuo Matsuzawa, the Heiwado president, and Michio Uchi, the Ichihara accountant, were also arrested.

The figure is reportedly part of 900 billion yen in loans and guarantees provided to some 90 companies and

individuals since 1987. About 100 billion yen of this is thought to have ended up in the pockets of 200 members of parliament.

Liberal Democratic party leaders met opposition parties to discuss legal procedures for summoning Zenko Suzuki, the former prime minister, and Jun Shizaki, the former cabinet minister. They are suspected of receiving monies from Kyowa, a steel-frame manufacturer.

In return for political favours.

The ruling party bowed to opposition demands to approve the testimony in an effort to end their boycott of parliament, which has paralysed debate, including budget talks, for more than a week. But the parties failed to agree on the procedures and are to meet again today to try to resolve the impasse, reports said.

The Liberal Democrats are baulking at opposition demands that the testimony by Mr Suzuki, aged 81, who was prime minister in 1980-2, should be subject to normal judicial procedures.

The opposition has so far failed to make the ruling party summon Fumio Abe, the man allegedly at the centre of the scandal. Mr Abe, the former head of the Liberal Dem-

ocratic party faction of Kuchi Miyazawa, the prime minister, was charged this month with receiving bribes while he was minister in 1989 and 1990. The justice ministry intervened on Thursday to prevent Mr Abe from being forced to make a testimony, arguing that he was already the subject of legal action and that such a move could prejudice the outcome of his trial.

Mr Abe and the two other LDP members who are also members of the Miyazawa faction, are suspected of receiving 500 million yen from Kyowa in return for favours.

Opposition parties want to summon 21 people connected with the Kyowa affair as well as the four-year-old Recruit stocks-for-favours scandal, which led to the collapse of Noboru Takeshita's government in 1989.

The Liberal Democrats' loss of an upper house by-election on Sunday to an opposition candidate, who had focused his campaign on corruption, has fuelled the demands. The poll was seen as a prelude to the elections in July for the upper house, where the opposition has control. (AFP)

Nikkei plunges, page 18



Under arrest: Hiroyasu Watanabe, left, being taken to jail yesterday in Tokyo in connection with the loans scandal

Hanoi and Peking sign pact

HANOI: China and Vietnam, whose rivalry fuelled the Cambodia conflict, agreed to boost their economic co-operation and to help to ensure the success of the UN peace plan in Cambodia.

Nguyen Manh Cam, the Vietnamese foreign minister, told a joint press conference in Hanoi with Qian Qichen, the Chinese foreign minister, that Li Peng, the Chinese prime minister, had accepted an invitation to visit Vietnam in the second half of the year. Mr Cam and Mr Qian signed an economic and travel agreement. (Reuters)

Overwork fears

TOKYO: Most Japanese are afraid of dying from overwork, according to an opinion survey. Twenty-three per cent of those polled said they could not take holidays "out of respect for their superiors and their co-workers". (AFP)

Taps run dry

MANILA: The Philippine capital will be waterless for up to three days from today to allow installation of a flood control project. President Aquino has ordered the mayors of Manila and satellite towns to provide temporary supplies. (AFP)

China has a splash of coffee

FROM CATHERINE SAMSON IN PEKING

AT THE Xinghua gardens bathhouse, it would seem a little pretentious if you asked for decaffeinated coffee. The waitresses do not even ask if you want milk and sugar. But then you are not expected to drink the coffee, you are expected to bathe in it.

For the Chinese yuppie, coffee baths are the newest heights of decadence. "We always use Nescafe or Maxwell House," said Cao Baocai, the manager, who knows his good name depends on foreign brands.

The bathhouse offers a range of gourmet baths including Cleopatra-style milk, vinegar, and rice wine. "I have tried them all," said Mr Cao. So what did the coffee do for him? Mr Cao refers to an information sheet. "It invigorates you, helps the circulation, gets rid of stress." Did it really do all that for him? "Oh yes."

No city dwellers have hot water on tap. Some can shower in hot water at work. Most, however, still use public bathhouses, which are traditionally grimy, grey places where washing is best done as quickly as possible.

The Xinghua gardens bathhouse has been open since 1921, but three years ago Mr Cao realised that he should move with the times. So the bathhouse was refurbished for 5.2 million yuan (£525,000) and reopened last month as a luxury establishment, complete with a gilt chandelier in the lobby. On average, 300 customers a day spend up to five hours wallowing in the hot water and pleasant surroundings.

A visit to an ordinary bathhouse costs about a yuan. A sauna and shower at Xinghua Gardens costs seven yuan. But the full works — including a back scrub, massage, sauna and steam bath, and the bath of your choice in a private room — can cost up to 55 yuan.

In a steamy, white-tiled private room the bath is half-filled with hot water. A middle-aged attendant in white overalls and black boots comes in bearing a plastic jug of bath essence, in this case black coffee.

"The coffee did nothing for me, but my skin was a shade darker when I came out," said one customer. Many prefer a milk bath, guaranteed to leave your skin soft and smooth.

Men and women are segregated inside the bathhouse. Women sit around naked in armchairs in their common room, their hair in plastic caps. Others read soggy newspapers in a crowded sauna. The rooms are clean. Just sometimes, however, in the men's section, customers forget where they are and spit on the floor.

SIR RICHARD ALLENBOROUGH has been awarded the Hamburg Shakespeare Prize for 1992 in recognition of his long stage and film career. The 40,000 marks (£14,000) prize, offered annually by the FVS foundation, will be handed over in June at a ceremony in Hamburg.



Sharron Murgatroyd: modified bungalow

□

Princess Margaret, leading politicians and opera stars are to attend a huge fundraising party for the charity, Victim Support, in London in April hosted by the freed hostage Terry Waite. The party, in honour of released hostages and those still captive, will be held near Mr Waite's home in Blackheath. Six hundred guests will attend, including Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, and fellow hostage John McCarthy.

□

The outgoing Hong Kong governor, Sir David Wilson, has taken the title of Lord Wilson of Tillyorn of Fanzean and Fanling, a government spokesman said. His life peerage was given in the Queen's New Year honours. Tillyorn is the name of the governor's family home in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, while Fanzean is the name of the valley with which he has a family association dating from the early 18th century. Fanling in Hong Kong's New Territories is the governor's official rural residence.

□

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Clifford Longley

Women who want to become priests should see a vocation as their duty, and not as a matter of equal rights

The concept of vocation is one of the casualties of an age that sanctions self-interest as a virtuous motive for personal choice. Vocation referred not just to a life dedicated to the church, but also provided a religious way of looking at all other trades and professions. Vocations were regarded as "callings". The person or thing doing the calling was usually God, but sometimes He called through a surrogate; the state or the community acted as His channel. But in every case an individual became a clergyman — or doctor, soldier, teacher, writer, even cobbler — because that was what God wanted.

The "call", though from God, was described as if heard from an inner voice, like the voices of conscience, but that did not usually mean an actual voice, as in a vision or hallucination. Obeying a vocation meant following God's will, a moral duty that overrode personal preferences. But a career, the modern idea that has replaced vocation, means following one's own will. Vocation implies a highly ambivalent attitude to ambition and promotion, which may be God's will but may not. But a career is about rights, equality of opportunities, employment protection laws and the quest for personal fulfillment. Vocations are essentially noble, careers only rarely so, and then by accident.

This eclipse of vocation has not been confined to the secular realm; it has penetrated far into the internal affairs of the church — although, confusingly, the word is still used there (while now meaning the modern idea of career), it is revealing to listen to the irritable exchanges in the Anglican debate about women priests, which is about to resume in next week's General Synod meeting, while filtering out the pros and cons of the issue itself in order to concentrate only on hearing the upper resonances. What world view do the speakers hold? What view of God and His action?

It quickly becomes apparent from the higher harmonics of the argument that both sides share an impoverished idea of "priestly vocation", by which they mean, in mundane fact, a career in the church. Having to give up such a career (on the part of the antis) or not being allowed to start such a career (on the part of the pros) is presented as a cause of pain, the avoidance of which is an imperative all are deemed to share. What follows is the mutual moral blackmail of "my pain is worse than your pain", which if it continues much longer will do more damage to the Church of England than ordaining (or not ordaining) women could ever do.

No more edifying is the claim of married men who suffer the "pain" of exclusion from the Roman Catholic priesthood, as if they were being denied a right. In career terms, such discrimination is as unjust as discrimination against women. Indeed, if the ordination of women or married men is presented as a question of equal career opportunities, there

When a vocation was recognised it involved painful obedience and risk

ship between the created which, while not sparing pain nor preventing trouble, brings all things out for the best in the end. Trust is the crucial idea in relation to providence and so, therefore, is faith in a benign personal God.

It should not be surprising that the collapse in confidence in the notion of providence follows the growth of secularism. In modern culture, the ghost of the idea of providence is now only present in the guiding hand of the author of fiction or drama over the lives of their characters. But if the Christian (or Jewish) idea of providence says the overall plan of history is invisible, it does, nonetheless, offer a role for everybody in that plan, a role that is knowable. Finding that role and playing it is the same as hearing a call and answering it. There may be no mystery about it, no need to read the tea-leaves. A strong faith in providence eliminates the need to strive mightily in order to find God's will. It is enough to obey one's conscience, do one's duty and behave morally, and to be generally and willingly available.

In that state of mind whatever happens next is God's will, a local fragment of the providential plan for universal salvation. It is not required to listen hard for the whisperings of an inner voice. The divine message might just as well be found hiding in the six vac columns.

Ronald Payne investigates why the rural French scorn Britons who live beside them

This week's outburst from Jean-Yves le Gallou, the leader of the French National Front's Paris region, against British and other European settlers in rural France, is another reminder that Monsieur Chauvin was a Frenchman. Not entirely by accident is his name immortalised as the symbol of blind nationalism.

Even though I count myself a firm Francophile, with ten years of residence in France to prove it, I am conscious of chauvinist tendencies in the national character. Quite often, just a few grumbles about some aspect of French life, as for example the fiendish bureaucracy of the préfecture, would cause close friends to strike back hard. "Je m'excuse, monsieur, de vous dire..." you always know that something pretty nasty is coming after a touch of formal French politeness "but if you do not like it here you have only to return to your own pays." The vocation did not guarantee personal fulfilment. The emotional reaction of the recipient of the call, whether pain, hurt or joy, was as irrelevant in deciding the correct response as the feelings which went with any other moral choice.

Vocation is a specific instance of a broader concept, that of providence, known since the ancient Greeks, as a divine watchfulness and guidance over the affairs of mankind. Pre and post-Christian concepts of providence, such as Stoicism or Marxism, assumed a rationality that governed human destiny and ultimately left mankind little scope to change it. One could row with the tide or row against it, but there was no doubt which way it flowed. Providence, in Christian terms, allows for freedom, but does not guarantee progress. The eschatos, the goal of history, is actually outside history. It may come tomorrow, or never. The New Testament idea of providence follows closely on God's relationship with Israel in the Old, a mysterious friend to the creator and the created which, while not sparing pain nor preventing trouble, brings all things out for the best in the end. Trust is the crucial idea in relation to providence and so, therefore, is faith in a benign personal God.

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Spoiling a country idyll

feelings towards the Dutch, Anglo-Saxons or even the Saxons. M le Gallou declared, "But come the day when 80 per cent of the population of the Dordogne are English, it will no longer be the Dordogne, even if the English there are very amiable."

In French eyes it is difficult to imagine anyone more foreign than les anglais. In the Dordogne, Normandy and Provence, those areas of France where neo-colonialism from the foggy island on the edge of Europe have settled, they do stand out. British householders always seem to be messily dressed whereas French equivalents tend to be smartly clothed; as English country gentry used to be. Only a few years ago it was generally believed that Englishmen would always look like Le Major Thompson, son of the Pierre Dandin son.

"I have no hatred or xenophobic

West Country and Welsh folk show towards semi-attached "grockles" who take up weekend cottage space in their rural communities.

Few real farmers choose to buy land in France. So the French National Front is wrong to worry about the settlers displacing local agriculturists from their traditional homes. The truth is that both in France and in England genuine country people are only too pleased to sell uncomfortable ancient buildings at a profit so as to take up residence in purpose-built modern bungalows full of gadgets. Some people, it has to be said, are more warmly welcome as rural newcomers than others. Top of the league come celebrities, preferably from stage or screen, but at a pinch authors and footballers will do.

Any guaranteed celebrity is immune from criticism and becomes a cherished possession. Peter Mayle is a good example. He has written in such heart-warming fashion about the idyllic life of Provence as to become a permanent inhabitant of the best-seller list. Sounding out local opinion about the famous English resident, whose work all admired but few had read (if not being available in translation), I found that French neighbours were proud of him but scornful of less famous foreigners in the district.

A stout pin-striped countrywoman I consulted by the roadside knew at once where to find l'écrivain anglais. "Apart from him, she said, "there's nothing but foreigners along this road — Germans, Dutch, English." And she added with some distaste, "Et les parisiens", which would, I suppose, include National Frontist Gallou, from the Ille-de-France. It all goes to show that it is easiest to hate the devil that you know most intimately.

I must not be forgotten

After three years living under the Iranian death threat Salman Rushdie calls on Britain not to sell him out

SALLY SOAMES



Rushdie, fatwa victim: do not sacrifice my case for improved diplomatic relations with Iran

After three years of such confusions and obfuscations, we must

a right existed, all of us would be silenced. Offence is not, and must never be, a reason for censorship in a free society.

So, *Satanic Verses* is a serious novel, a moral novel, and as good a novel as I am able to write. It is not an unreadable novel. It is neither filthy nor degrading nor abusive. The Muslim attack on the book depends on denying me any intellectual credibility at all, depends on denying the text any merit whatsoever, on a refusal to discuss it as a work of art. But it is neither a work of non-fiction nor a polemical tract against Islam. It is neither filth nor trash nor garbage. It is not what they say it is. It is a work of art.

Nowhere in the entire catalogue of human rights will you find the Right Not To Be Offended. If such

what's the charge? He has been anti-Islamic. An Egyptian novelist, his publisher and printer are jailed for eight years, and what's the charge? Blasphemy again. They, too, have been anti-Islamic. At the Cairo Book Fair, many books are seized. What's the reason? Well, you see, these books are anti-Islamic, too. In Iran itself, of course they have been murdering their writers for years.

If we are talking about offence, however, let's weigh a few things in the balance. On the one hand, we have a novel. On the other, we have censorship, threats to publishers and their families, intimidation of booksellers, firebombs in bookstores, incitement to murder, children hung with sandwich boards reading "I am ready to kill him", public vilification, terrorist threats from a foreign power, multi-million dollar offers of bounty money, the knifing of one translator, the murder of another. Which is the real insult? Which is the real offence?

A distinguished Saudi novelist is stripped of his citizenship, and

community of its dissident artists, is OK as long as it is godly?

The British government has repeatedly stated that improved relationships with other countries will be linked to those countries' human rights records. Iran has one of the worst human rights records in the world.

Much has been written of late about my relationship with the British government. One Sunday newspaper has suggested that the government is preparing a "great betrayal", that the Rushdie case will be sidelined and full relations with Iran speedily restored. I don't want to believe this. I have no wish to be in an adversarial relationship with the British government, because it has protected me and remains my best hope of a solution, but I wish that the government would make it a little easier for me to believe that they're strongly and resolutely on my side.

It is clear that there is a crunch coming: that during the next months, there's going to be a major sorting out of this country's relationship with Iran. And what I hope all of us are here tonight to say is that any deal with Iran which excludes a full, public and effective settlement of the Rushdie case will be unacceptable. Not just to a special pleading bunch of writers and lefties, but, I believe, to all the British people.

The hostages have come out of the Lebanon. There is no longer any reason for the Rushdie case to be soft-pedalled. It will never fade away. It can only be fixed at the government level. So this has become a simple political question: how hard will the British government push? The answer to that question is, to an extent, in our hands. Politicians are sensitive to public opinion. The louder we shout, the harder they push.

A friend, far more skilled in diplomacy, than I, gave me the following piece of good advice: "In politics, it's the squeaky wheel that gets oiled." This distinguished assembly represents one loud squeak of the wheel. All over the world, today and in the next few days, other wheels will be squeaking up for freedom. And we will just go on and on squeaking until we are well and truly oiled.

This is an edited version of Mr Rushdie's speech given at the Stationers' Hall last night.

Prince recycles royal warrants

THE Prince of Wales has issued his strongest warning yet that those who supply goods by royal appointment must prove their greenness if they wish to retain the royal seal of approval.

The Prince has been lobbying his own royal warrant holders for nearly two years, but this week upped the pressure with an open threat to all those who supply other members of the royal family. If they do not satisfy environmental criteria, companies have been told they may find themselves removed from the royally approved list.

The Royal Warrant Holders' Association, in a letter sent this week to its 890 members, ranging from Harrods to Jaguar cars, warns that in the light of the prince's views "it would be prudent" if they were in future to include a statement on their environmental policy in their annual reports.

A "directive" from the Prince of Wales's office will follow shortly, setting out the green criteria that companies will be expected to meet.

The annual report of the association, sent to members this week, reveals that the prince met six members of its council three months ago and made it clear that all companies would be expected to conduct "an initial environmental review".

Some warrant holders may find it harder than others. The Ardath Tobacco Company and ICI, for example, have few friends at present among environmentalists.

A Palace spokeswoman says: "Warrants won't be revoked but when they are reviewed every ten years, if companies don't meet the standards, the warrant won't be renewed."



• How green is green?

According to the Simmons Market Research Bureau, Britain can now be divided into five distinct shadings: Premium Green (22 per cent of the population, seriously green); Red, White & Green (20 per cent outdoors, but not ecologically so); No-Cosa Ecologists (28 per cent vocally green, but deeds do not match words); Convenient Green (11 per cent willing to pay for a clean planet). And the rest? "Unconcerned."

Rare privilege

THOSE who have been on the receiving end of the legal skills of Peter Carter-Ruck will be interested to learn that Britain's most famous — and there is nothing he can do about it. Under the cloak of parliamentary privilege, Nigel Griffiths, Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, has tabled a motion attacking companies, like

Eurocopy "whose financial might is directed at gagging all media criticism". What does he mean?

Peter Carter-Ruck & Partners were hired by Eurocopy to handle an investigation by BBC Television's *Watchdog* last week. But when they are reviewed every ten years, if companies don't meet the standards, the warrant won't be renewed.

case of the old Maxwell ploy of the gagging writ. Under normal circumstances Carter-Ruck would surely expect to clean up over such a serious allegation. Yesterday, for once, he seemed frustrated. "It is bad enough what I have to put up with from *Private Eye*," he said.

Major mystery

What on earth was Neil Kinnock on about at the champagne socialists' ball at the Park Lane hotel? Perhaps it was the excitement of sitting next to David Puttnam or

Paddy Ashdown to the first night?

Far from having second thoughts about the timing, Tim Starkey of the Forum theatre in Manchester, where the play will open in the second week of March, says: "The play was written a year ago and we couldn't have written a better script. We might even invite Neil Kinnock to the first night." But Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs are not amused by the play, set in a "fictional" marginal constituency in the north of England called Ashfield. On being told the news yesterday, Frank Haynes, the Labour MP for the real-life Nottinghamshire marginal bearing the same name said: "Flipping heck; I have been happily married for 44 years. Not everyone will think this is funny. They should postpone it until after polling day. I am retiring at the election and I'd quite like to see it — when I am no longer the MP."

Meriel Dickinson, a soprano at the English National Opera, might have recalled the words of W.C. Fields about appearing with children and animals after the first night of Kurt Weill's Street Scene at the English National Opera this week. When Dickinson came on stage to announce she was going to walk, Queenie, the dog, a cairn terrier, promptly sat down and refused to budge. No amount of persuasion could move her and the hapless soprano was reduced to dragging the dog off-stage right, to the obvious amusement of the audience. Queenie later made a reappearance but Ms Dickinson was taking no chances: Queenie was carried on and off again in her arms.

Marginal interest

A LABOUR MP in a marginal constituency is caught in bed with



...and moreover

PHILIP HOWARD

They spell it Vinci, and pronounce it Vinchy. Those pesky foreigners always spell better than they pronounce. Correct spelling, orthography, is one of the trickier departments of English grammar, because English is a hotch-potch or hodgepodge of more languages than any other under the palate or over the tongue. Ever since Bede started to write it down, beautifully, there have been intermittent attempts to simplify our spelling, by making it phonetic.

The flaw with these proposals is that they would not make it simpler. For one thing, whose pronunciation would our new model spelling try to represent in letters? That of Belfast, where a lake is a hole in a kettle? We can no longer pretend that the best way to pronounce English is the nasal drawl that used to be called the Oxford accent, and is now described as Standard English. For most of the English-speaking world this sounds odd, or quaint, or charming, or patronising, depending on the auditor's taste and disposition. But most of them do not want to talk like that. So, why should they be made to spell like that?

For another thing, the spelling of a word preserves its history. To destroy the fossilised past at a stroke would be as vandalistic as wiping out a Tudor town centre to replace it with concrete cubes, on the grounds that the modern architecture is more efficient. The English way is to let things evolve naturally, whether they

are towns, or the constitution, or spelling. Whenever we have gone in for root-and-branch reconstruction, whether of our counties or our government, the result has been catastrophic.

There is a kind of spelling reform going on that has the same effect as a bulldozer on a Roman foundation. It is invented by advertising copywriters and designers as an orthographic pun to catch your eye and make you snigger. Consider the joky RITE family, as in Starrite and Warerite. Parents who would be appalled at squeezing their children's feet into shoes that were too small for them, do not seem to worry about squeezing this stunted spelling of right onto them.

You get LITE instead of Light, as in the beer, Miller Lite, as an insouciant you spelling. The letter Q brings out the goat in aden. So we get Kwikfit and Kwiksave. This supermarket would look classier as Quicksave. Kwik looks to me like a representation of someone clearing his throat before spitting. PRUF for proof is another in Childsplay, applied to those medicine bottles that break your nails as you try to get the lids off. Grammar has not yet invented a name for this barbarous type of phonetic spelling. Can we coin a new word, ADSPEL, which has the advantage of being an example of the phenomenon it describes?

Spelling is not the most important part of grammar or of good writing. Shakespeare spell-



SIRENS OF RACISM

Squeezed by the pressures of an impending election, the asylum bill appears doomed for the time being for lack of parliamentary time. If as a result the Tories forbear from playing the racial card in the election campaign, something good will have come out of the loss.

The replacement of Margaret Thatcher by John Major might have been expected to produce a government more liberal in its attitude to race. Mrs Thatcher was aware of the populist appeal of racism. Immediately after she made her "swamping" remarks about immigration in January 1978, the Conservatives rose five points in the opinion polls. During her tenure support for the National Front all but evaporated.

Mr Major claims to be passionate in his hatred of racism. Why then were his ministers so frantic to get the potentially inflammatory asylum bill on the pre-election agenda? Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, formally announced the bill to cheers at last year's Tory party conference, where he accused his Labour opposite number of "attempting to pander to ethnic minorities". His supposed crackdown on "bogus" refugees inspired a stream of vitriol in the popular press against a "flood" of illegal immigrants. Mr Major should tell his ministers to button their lips in the run-up to the election, even if a bill would still be introduced should he win.

Whichever party is the victor, legislation on asylum must come. Applications for political asylum to Britain reached 50,000 last year, ten times the average over the 1980s. Labour admits the problem, though its proposed bill would concentrate on removing delays. The Tories' bill had its flaws, notably in the brevity of the appellate process, but the government is right to want to cut short the limbo suffered by those whose applications for admission languish for months and years.

With or without a new bill, more civil servants and faster procedures were needed for handling applications. Yet Britain has

few of the pressures of some other European states. Over 250,000 refugees applied for asylum in Germany last year and 400,000 are expected this year. Germany's constitution, drawn up in 1949, enshrines rights of asylum that are more liberal than other EC countries. Germany plays host to 60 per cent of all refugees to the EC. Its constitution may be hospitable; its people are less so.

Refugees used to be put up in hostels until such accommodation became too vulnerable to attacks by neo-Nazis. The government has had to move many refugees into guarded camps. Last month, a British high-court judge ruled that a refugee who had fled from Sudan to Germany and thence to Britain should be allowed to stay here, because if he were sent back to Germany, he would be in danger of attack. So refugees are now fleeing from the persecution of refugees.

Meanwhile there has been a rise in support for extreme right-wing parties over much of Europe. Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front party in France has overtaken the Socialists in opinion polls ahead of local elections in the Paris region next month. Anti-immigrant parties in Italy, Austria and Belgium are reaping votes.

Spain's prime minister, Felipe González, has just warned that illegal immigration is one of the main problems facing Spain and the EC. Refugees and immigrants are indeed a Europe-wide phenomenon. Once borders come down at the end of this year they will aim for the easiest point of entry, both to the east and the south of the EC, hoping then to move freely within the Community. Britain cannot conceivably dismantle all border controls, least of all when other states will certainly be re-erecting theirs.

At the same time, a co-ordinated immigration and asylum policy across the EC is essential. The issue will not vanish. It is becoming the most explosive in all Europe. Some Europe-wide agreement on frontier controls and asylum criteria might at least stiffen the resolve of democratic politicians to resist the seductions of racism.

BATTLE FOR AN ARMY

Nothing is more dangerous to the stability of a nation than a large impoverished army of humiliated men, aimless, leaderless and resentful. The Soviet Army, once a mighty force of over four million men, is now huddled in rotting barracks and temporary camps while the leaders of Russia and Ukraine argue over its future. Failure to agree on the control, financing, size and function of an army that Russia wants to keep together and Ukraine wants to split into national armies will undermine the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

President Yeltsin and President Kravchuk drew back at their meeting in Minsk yesterday from open confrontation, knowing the cost to themselves, their economies and hope of democracy and reform. But Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldavia have rejected even a plan for a two-year transition to national armies and insist on going ahead with the creation of their own forces, based on the hardware and manpower now on their territories. Russia is still paying for the Soviet Army and has little room for compromise.

Embittered and indoctrinated Soviet Army officers, still hankering after a united country and angry at Mr Yeltsin's "betrayal" of Soviet power, have spoken in the Russian parliament in support of the former communist apparat. Vice-president Aleksandr Ruzskoi has raised the banner of internal revolt against price rises and privatisation, and against Russia ceding any more power to its "ungrateful" former empire. Mr Yeltsin has already had to miss a meeting with James Baker for emergency talks with the officers of the Black Sea fleet. Three weeks ago he quelled army discontent at a mass meeting that led to substantial pay rises.

The bulk of the Soviet Army is stationed in Russia. Conditions have always been bad, especially for conscripts, but as the standard of living for civilians plummets, the army, with large food and fuel stocks, is relatively better off. However, conscription has virtually

POINT OF DECIMAL

The United Kingdom is celebrating the anniversary of the expulsion of an ogre: the ogre of counting its money by twelves and twenties. Decimalisation and metrication were introduced to jerk British commerce and science into harmony with the rest of the world, in order to make them more efficient. Today the Royal Mint announces that decimalisation has come of age. This suggests that the country is not yet entirely regimented into tens, since what is being commemorated is the February 15 of 21 years ago, not the most decimal of numbers.

The decimalisation of the coinage to make life tidier and rescue schoolchildren from long division of pounds, shillings and pence had been mooted for more than three centuries. Plantagenet Palliser staked his reputation on it. The tentative British move towards the change was started in 1849, with the introduction of the florin, representing two shillings. Never mind that the name was coined from the 13th-century gold piece of Florence, which had that city's fleur-de-lis on the reverse.

The British florin represented a tenth of a pound and was accordingly undeniably decimal. It was much disliked at the time, being known as the "godless" florin because it omitted F. D. (Fidei Defensor, defender of the faith), and the "graceless" florin because it omitted the usual *Dei Gratia* (by the grace of God). People resent and fear change in the change in their pockets more than any other change imposed by their masters.

The coin will roll full circle this autumn. A smaller 10p is being introduced in September to replace the current "florin", the last

ally broken down and draft-dodging is widespread. Non-Russian soldiers are slipping away to their republics. The troops returning to Russia from Eastern Europe and those due back from the Baltic republics have nowhere to go: most of the new barracks promised by Germany are for Ukraine. Mr Yeltsin wants to cut numbers by at least 15 per cent and phase out conscription. But the economy cannot absorb more unemployed and a disbanded army of the dispossessed is a greater danger than a force still subject to discipline.

Russia will probably take over the old Soviet defence ministry, and the rump of the Soviet Army will become the Russian army. But any attempt to enforce Russian military authority in Ukraine would provoke an immediate clash. Untrammeled sovereignty has been the one consistent demand of Kiev, underestimated by Mr Gorbachev and Mr Yeltsin. Confrontation is less likely with the Central Asian republics. They have little sense of statehood and no wish for a big standing army, however much they may need troops to counter internal ethnic unrest.

Mr Yeltsin must know that Ukraine will go its own way. An eventual compromise may be found in the sensible formula put forward yesterday by Nursultan Nazarbayev, the wily Kazakh leader. He called for a defence union modelled on Nato, and already military officials have been asking Nato details of how it is organised and how sovereign armies can have a unified command. Nato has already set up regular meetings with Eastern European leaders, and next month foreign ministers will welcome their counterparts from all 11 republics.

The West is already helping with the dismantlement of nuclear warheads. It must now use the tested forum of Nato to show that sovereignty and co-operation in defence are compatible. Military suspicions and national rivalries in the former Soviet Union are now the greatest threat to world peace.

surviving pre-decimal coin. Coins will then come in a roughly ascending scale of size to match their value. The ugly 50p heptagon will still make holes in trouser pockets through which the tiny 5p and worthless 1p discs will slip down into socks. And the Queen's image, looking miraculously as it did 40 years ago, will remain the one constant in our continually changing coinage. And shortage of money rather than the numeration system of the coinage will remain the problem for most people.

The shift to decimalisation and metrication has been patchy and has not brought all the benefits that were promised by the neophytes. Britons are slowly believing that 21C means almost as pleasant a day as 70F. But they still boast about how many miles to the gallon their cars can do. The standardisers of Brussels graciously permit them to drink pints rather than litres of draught beer and to have pints delivered to their early morning doorsteps. In Brussels-Speak, these are non-transferable goods and therefore not market-distorting. Even the most energetic English milkman is not going to deliver pints to the doorstep of Jacques Delors.

Old measures do represent human sizes. The inch is the top joint of the thumb; the foot proclaims its corporeal origin; and the yard is a more natural stride than a metre for the average man. Americans stick to their miles and inches, pints and gallons, rather than metres and litres. Yet they are not abused as efficiency-averse conservatives. Humankind does not live by decimals alone. But they are easier to count by, so long as Britons are born with five digits to a hand.

Coping with peril of aircraft fires

From Dr Ian R. Hill

Sir, As the pathologist who analysed the findings of the Manchester air disaster of August 1985, I have followed with interest the correspondence (February 11) on sprinkler systems for aircraft. I am one of the people who proposed the idea of smoke hoods or masks. This proposal was not, as Mr James Ty suggests in his letter, an easy option, it was based upon the knowledge gained from this accident and a study of previous events.

People quickly become incapacitated in fires. They may then fall over, blocking the escape routes for others. If they survive they will sustain inhalational injury, which may lead to chronic lung problems.

It has been suggested that smoke hoods may delay the evacuation of aircraft. This is based upon tests of non-toxic smoke, thus the results are not really relevant to the real world of aircraft fires because the effects of incapacitation are not those.

Sprinklers may well solve the problem, but the evidence presented by researchers and manufacturers at the meeting organised by the Civil Aviation Authority at Gatwick last May showed that many questions remain unanswered. It would seem therefore to be somewhat premature to hail them as the answer. Before this can be done we will have to be assured that they not only put out the fire but that they make the atmosphere safe to breathe. Also, of course, any sprinkler system must not interfere with the aircraft's systems and structure.

In the meantime, mindful of the risks of aircraft fires, I and my family will continue to carry our smoke hoods every time we fly.

Yours faithfully,
IAN R. HILL
The London Hospital Medical College, Department of Forensic Medicine, Turner Street, E1.
February 13.

Somerville's mixture

From Professor M. C. Bradbrook, FRA

Sir, Somerville's image ("Female bastion of academia to surrender status", later edition, February 4) has been more fiercely feminist than Girton's in the present century; its buildings are smaller and cosier. The principal of Somerville said in the Eighties that "whatever the balance of this in the need to do so, we shall change".

As Mistress of Girton (1968-76), when I heard that King's was going mixed I felt first that my timer had struck an iceberg. It had not gone down. There are still more women teaching fellows alone at Girton than in 1976 (27 against 24). Those who agonise over the decision hope that the gamble will succeed for Somerville as it has for Girton.

And what will happen to Newnham and New Hall at Cambridge? Yours sincerely,
MURIEL BRADBROOK,
91 Chesterton Road, Cambridge.
February 12.

Muck into fuel

From Mrs Teresa Gorman, MP for Billericay (Conservative)

Sir, I must correct the impression given by Matthew Parris in his political sketch today that my question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry was anything other than serious and straightforward.

It referred to the enterprise of Cory Environmental, which has set up a new plant at Mucking Flats in my constituency, to convert methane gas from London's waste into electricity and sell it to the national grid. It is commonplace at question time for MPs to draw attention to innovation of this sort and I am surprised that any other interpretation could be placed on my comments.

Yours faithfully,
TERESA GORMAN,
House of Commons.
February 13.

Order of the bath

From The Reverend Andrew Body

Sir, I am grateful for the statistics on Britain's bathroom activities (report, February 12; letters, February 14). We find that our old-fashioned and generously sized bath is the only convenient place in which to wash out our musical son's tuba.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW BODY,
St Mary's Vicarage,
22 Harlow Oval,
Harrogate, North Yorkshire.

Clergy job losses

From the Reverend E. M. T. Underhill

Sir, In your report of February 12 on clergy job losses in the Durham diocese you refer to the suspension of the right of presentation to all the rectories as another of the diocesan "rationalisation" plans.

In the letter from the bishops announcing these plans there is a third prong in the package: apart from half-a-dozen or so newly ordained deacons, no appointments will be made from outside the diocese in the foreseeable future.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Accountants putting office in order

From the President, Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, and others

Sir, Accountancy reform, far from being neglected as your leading article (February 10) seems in part to suggest, has become almost a way of life for the profession in the past two to three years and began well before the corporate collapses of 1991 focused attention on the responsibilities of directors and auditors.

Apart from the work of the Accounting Standards Board and the Auditing Practices Board which you mention, the profession was instrumental in setting up the Cadbury committee on the financial aspects of corporate governance, in part because we were concerned about the pressure which the current system can place on the vital independence of the auditor.

Our three institutes have recently been given powers under the Companies Act to regulate auditing work, including direct inspection of practices for the first time. This move, which will enable us to fulfil the public-interest obligations of our royal charters more effectively, represents the most dramatic increase in the regulation of the profession for a generation.

The professional bodies have also overhauled and strengthened their disciplinary arrangements, and later this month the three institutes will be publishing a new guide to professional ethics.

Our institutes are looking forward to seeing the outcome of the Cadbury committee's work, with a view to implementing its recommendations. Our own work to ensure that ethical standards keep pace with new trends in business can never be completed.

That "quiet life" which you mention is certainly no longer available, but we do believe that the profession has already put in hand the necessary changes to satisfy all reasonable critics. Those changes now need time to work.

Yours faithfully,
IAN MCNEIL, President,
The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales,
IAN TEGNER (President, Scotland),
THOMAS O'HIGGINS (President, Ireland),
The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, PO Box 433, Moorgate Place, EC2.

National radio

From Mr C. W. Denney

Sir, Your editorial ("Nothing on the radio", February 5) concerning the second national radio network made reference to the "exorbitant cost of renting public-sector transmitters, a price partly dictated by union agreements". Each element of this is worthy of comment.

The use of the word "union" can only be explained, I think, if it refers to the International Telecommunications Union. This is an agency of the United Nations, not a trade union and is charged with regulating the use of the radio spectrum for the benefit of all users. It has, therefore, little involvement with any pricing policy.

The operators of INR2 are not obliged to rent public-sector transmitters (I assume a reference to the BBC); they are free to build and operate their own equipment should they so choose.

The rental that would be charged by the BBC for use of the existing modern transmitter network covers the depreciated capital costs, operation, monitoring, maintenance and electricity costs — the last being a significant cost element.

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FEBRUARY
15
forthcoming
marriages

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15 1992

OBITUARIES

NORMAN READ

Norman Read, American geologist, died in Boston on January 23 aged 101. He was born on January 17, 1891.

A SOLO pilot until well over 90, an oil explorer until the age of 99, Norman Read spent the last years of a lifetime of sometimes hair-raising activity defying the stereotype of old-age. He died in Boston only six days after a joyous 101st birthday party which had been held at the Heathwood Medical Retirement Center in Chestnut Hill.

Read was an inveterate skier, flyer and mountaineer throughout his long life. He graduated from Yale with the class of 1913, when he played center for the varsity football team. He then received a master's degree in mining geology from Columbia University. After leaving college he was advised by the president of Kennecott Copper not to prospect in Alaska but to explore Texas for oil — which he continued to do aggressively until only two years ago.

He was one of the first Americans to join the Royal Flying Corps in the first world war and was involved in the traumatic crash of a Bleriot aircraft resulting in major

back injuries, which did not seem to deter him from the exploits he enjoyed during the rest of his life.

In 1925 he was a member of the expedition which made the first ascent of Mt Logan, at 19,850 feet, the highest mountain in Canada. Twenty-five years later he and a distinguished Swiss mountaineer, André Roch, made Logan's second ascent. He skied on every conceivable slope in the Alps, flew to both the North and South Poles and participated in international ski races in both Europe and Chile long before it was the thing to do. As well as flying solo until he was well over 90, he was at 90 presented with the keys of Davos, Switzerland, by the mayor of the city, along with a lifetime pass to all its ski slopes, in recognition of a lifetime of accomplishment in the Alps.

He was a member of, among others, the Essex County Club, Whites of London and the British, French and Swiss Alpine Clubs. He resigned from the Explorers Club, and the American and British Alpine Clubs as soon as women were invited to join. His permanent address for many years was New York's Brook Club.

Andor Foldes, Hungarian-born American pianist and champion of Bartók, died on February 9 aged 78 at his home near Zurich. He was born on December 21, 1913.

THE names of Bartók and Andor Foldes are irrevocably coupled. Foldes met the composer when making his Vienna debut in 1929 and began a friendship which lasted until Bartók's death in 1945. Foldes quickly became a tireless champion of Bartók's piano music, including it in programmes against the composer's advice. As a pianist Foldes had the virtuoso qualities needed to interpret the work of Bartók, who feared for his friend's success in this role.

Hospitality was provoked by the inclusion in his recitals of such seemingly incomprehensible music, a poignant reminder of Bartók's then precarious status as a composer, notably in America. Not surprisingly, Foldes's complete recording of Bartók's piano music for Deutsche Grammophon was of classic status and had the added advantage of the composer's *imprimatur*, his blessing and approval.

Like many of his brilliant compatriots, notably Annie Fisher and Géza Anda, Andor Foldes was precociously gifted. He performed Mozart's exceptionally demanding Concerto in B flat, K 450, at the age of eight and later graduated from Dohnányi's celebrated master-class with distinction in 1932. While at the Budapest Academy he also studied composition with Leo Weiner and conducting with Ernst Unger.

ANDOR FOLDES



Foldes first toured Europe in 1933 but, impatient with what he saw as his lack of maturity, withdrew, broadening his outlook with an intense study of languages and philosophy before returning to the concert platform in 1939. His New York debut followed in 1940 but although he later became an American citizen he made Europe his base and gave a series of widely respected master classes in Saarbrücken between 1958 and 1965.

Andor Foldes started his career as a classical specialist and his recitals were

devoted principally to Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. But, as his Bartók suggests, his work became more richly inclusive over the years and his repertoire was extensive. His recording of Samuel Barber's *Excursions* — played with delightful nonchalance — will have been many listeners' introduction to that witty piece of American regionalism and, as a winner of the coveted Liszt Prize in 1933, Foldes played and recorded several works by Hungary's most celebrated composer.

Schumann was another speciality and again showed Foldes's recognisable virtues of clarity, taste and decorum. He was also the author of several books including *Two on a Continent* written with his wife, Lily Rendy, and *Keys to the Keyboard*, a brief and exceptionally practical guide to the pianist's problems. In the latter, Foldes, a charming and genial man, saw the performer's art as that of an exhilarating pioneer, forever scaling one peak in order to conquer another. His recipe for getting the fingers into a "glittery" mood before a concert must have been used by thousands. He warmed up by using Cramer's Study No 40 in B flat major, with its rapid semi-quaver triplets for both hands. Hardly surprisingly, this little gem of a book was translated into many different languages.

Keys to the Keyboard was aptly described in an introduction by Sir Malcolm Sargent as showing a "wisdom well expressed and clear in its guidance". Much the same could be said of Andor Foldes the pianist.

SYD VINCENT

Sydney George Vincent, Lancashire miners' leader, has died aged 70. He was born on May 13, 1921.

SYD Vincent succeeded Joe Gormley as leader of the Lancashire miners and when Gormley resigned the presidency of the National Union of Mineworkers there were those who believed he might succeed him once again. But a newly-introduced union rule excluding the candidacy of anybody over 55 was successful in ruling out Vincent and allowing Arthur Scargill a comfortable victory. If Vincent had become president, events might have been somewhat different. But in the long run he would have been no more successful than Scargill in arresting the decline of the industry and the palpable impotence of a once-great union. The fact remains, too, that he was no Gormley. They were both moderates, both slow-talking Lancastrians, but Gormley had considerable political skills which he demonstrated at the highest level while Vincent was obviously happier in local negotiations at the pits than in Whitehall or Congress House.

Vincent was born in Leigh, Lancashire, and began work as soon as he was 14. He became first a checkweighman, assessing the weight of coal produced by miners who were paid according to its weight, and then became a pit secretary for the union. He was elected a full-time NUM agent in 1965 and in 1971, when Gormley was elected president of the NUM, his chosen candidate, Vincent, was elected to follow him as Lancashire area secretary. Vincent was therefore on the union's national executive during the three great post-war strikes — in 1972 and 1974, when the miners were able to claim victory against the Heath government, and in 1984-85, from which the NUM emerged split, bitter, and weak.



at countless conferences, his outrageously coloured ties, and his natural gregariousness made him noticeably more popular than Gormley. Vincent was also interested particularly in his members' industrial welfare. He represented the NUM on the National Safety and Health Executive.

His wife predeceased him, as did one son, and he is survived by a son and a daughter.

APPRECIATIONS

Rear-Admiral John Howson

WHEN Rear-Admiral John Howson (obituary, February 7) retired for the second time in 1971, my wife and I bought his Nottinghamshire home — "The Vinery" at Burton-on-Trent.

I discovered he was not only a distinguished naval officer but a master brewer and the sale of the house was

completed over several glasses of his own excellent home-brewed beer.

Since that time several generations of rather peppery dachshunds have held dominion over a stout sea-going chest, left over from the Howson days, emphatically black-stencilled "Capt. J. Howson, RN". The next occupant of the box will be named "Jack" as a tribute of our affectionate regard for that fine man.

Barry D. Davies

Earl St Aldwyn

YOUR obituary of the Earl St Aldwyn rightly referred to his gracious manners. He had early training; over 70 years ago, when he was eight and I

ten, I challenged him to a race down a long corridor at Fairford Manor; he won and dashed into the nursery at the end, only for his governess to give him a tickling off for entering a room before a lady.

Sibyl Le Marchand

FEB 15 ON THIS DAY 1939



The Bismarck proved to be the most formidable battleship of the second world war. She sank Hood on May 24, 1941, but only after a desperate pursuit by ships and aircraft in dreadful weather was she brought to book on May 27 and sunk. At the launching ceremony, not many months before the start of the war, she was named by the grand-daughter of the Iron Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck.

BISMARCK LAUNCHED

Germany's biggest warship

From Our Special Correspondent

HAMBURG, Feb. 14

In brilliant sunshine — the "Hitler weather" which traditionally favours any important event at which the Führer is present — the first of Germany's 35,000-ton battleships to be named Bismarck, after the creator of the Second Reich, and watched by the makers of the Third Reich, moved down the Bosphorus and Voss slips to the sea.

Hamburg had prepared a great welcome for Herr Hitler. As the yacht carrying the Führer steamed down the Norder Elbe towards the launching slip shortly before 1 o'clock, the "pocket battleship" Admiral Scheer, the cruiser Nürnberg, and three destroyers fired salutes, while both banks of the river were bright with bunting and cheering crowds.

The Führer reached the green launching platform immediately below the high bows of the new battleship, accompanied by Field-Marshal Göring, Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force, the Foreign Minister, Herr von Ribbentrop, Dr. Goebbels, the Minister of Propaganda, and most of the other members of the Government. On the plat-

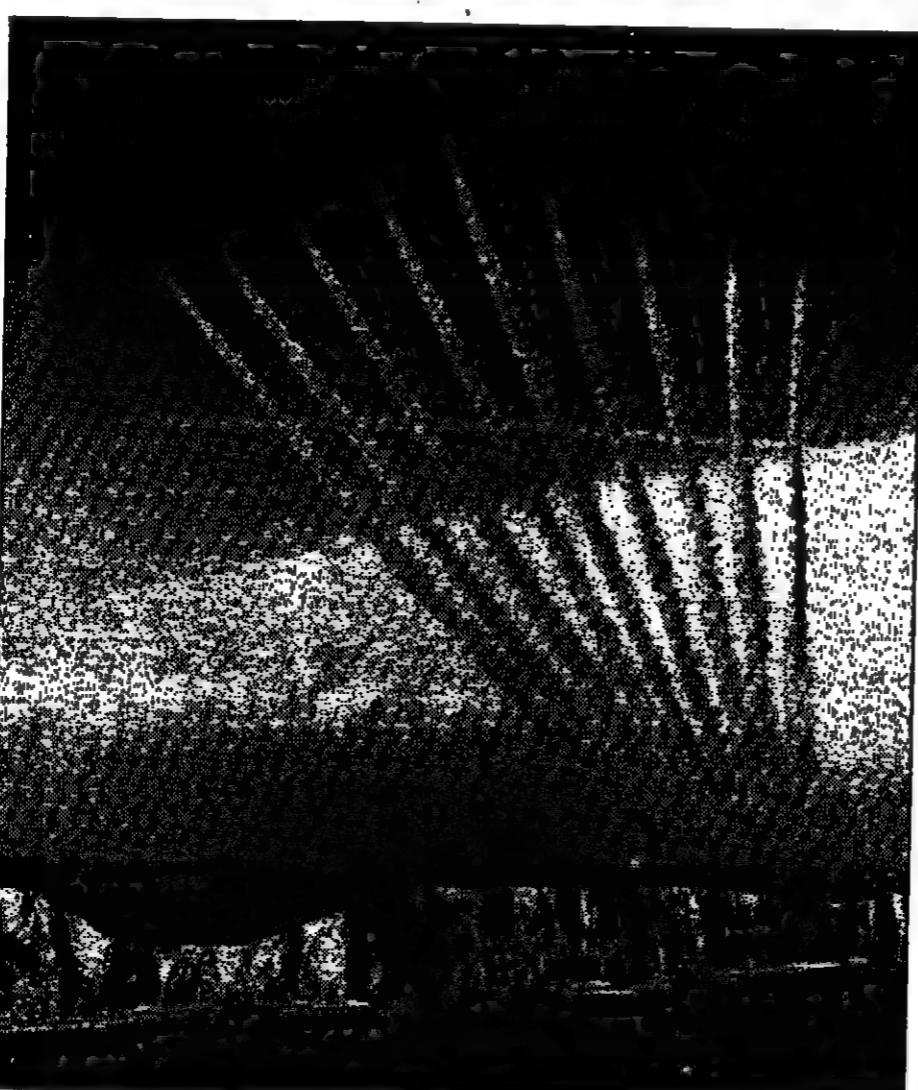
form itself Herr Hitler was assisted by the commanders of the three fighting forces and by Frau von Loewenfeld, the grand-daughter of the Iron Chancellor, who was to name the ship.

In a short speech, Herr Hitler said that the fate of the German Fleet, which was sunk 20 years ago after fighting gloriously for four years, still cast deep shadows over the heart of every German National-Socialist. Germany, therefore, looked upon the resurrection of that Fleet with particular love and sympathy. Limitations, dictated partly by circumstances and partly voluntarily, imposed upon under the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, accounted for the names of only a few of the great men of Germany could be borne by the large ships of the Fleet. Of all men who might claim to have prepared the way for the Third Reich, Bismarck stood out in mighty loneliness.

"As Führer of the German people and Chancellor of the Reich (continued Herr Hitler), I can give this ship no finer name from our history than the name of that man who, as a true knight without fear and without reproach, was the creator of German Empire, whose resurrection from the dire misery and whose wonderful enlargement has been granted to us by Providence."

Franz von Loewenfeld then named the ship, breaking a bottle of champagne on the bows as the blocks were knocked away. The Bismarck, however, did not move, and there was an anxious pause of more than three minutes before the bows slowly slid away from the launching platform — in Hamburg it is already a current joke that Field-Marshal Göring was forced to push her before she would move. Herr Hitler watched the ship steadily as she moved down the ways. When she had entered the water he smiled and, with a satisfied shake of the head, brought his clenched fist down on the railing which surrounded the platform.

ARTHUR GIBSON



Arthur Gibson and one of his many dramatic photographs of the Red Arrows

A PASSIONATE lifelong enthusiasm for flying, combined with an exceptional eye for a picture, made Arthur Gibson one of the world's outstanding air-to-air photographers. He travelled world-wide to photograph all kinds of aircraft from pre-1914 types to Concorde, from crop-sprayers to Mach 2 combat aircraft, from helicopters to jumbo jets. Nobody else captured so vividly the excitement of flying and, if he had one unfulfilled ambition, it was to take photographs on a spaceship.

To many, he was best known for his 25-year association with the Red Arrows, the RAF aerobatic team, of which he was made the only honorary civilian member in recognition of two superb films and a host of photographs. Yet it was on his abilities as a designer, rather than as a photographer, that he built his commercial success in the advertising world.

Twice Gibson added a year or two to his age — first, to get into Willesden School of Art, rather than grammar school; secondly to enter the RAFVR in 1944 and become a pilot. He never lost his great loyalty to the service and was a tireless supporter of the RAF Benevolent Fund.

After demobilisation in 1948 he worked as a freelance designer, achieving his first major breakthrough as an exhibition stand designer in the Festival of Britain in 1951. He became design

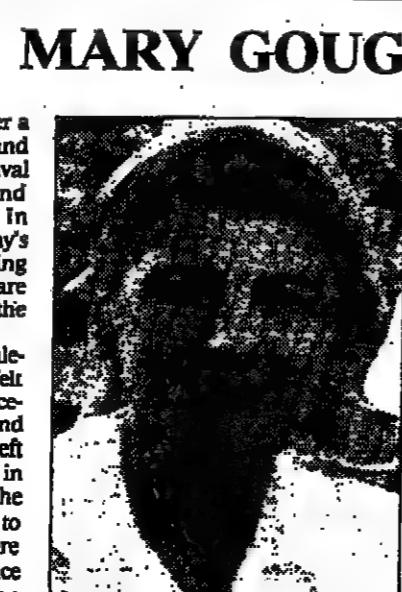
consultant to Vickers, the shipping, aircraft and armaments group, and it was his ability to obtain the kind of dramatic photographs he wanted that led to his developing his own talents as a photographer. Ironically, his first air-to-air photographs were taken not so much to show off the Viscount turboprop airliner as to demonstrate a new lens developed by another of his clients.

When Vickers became a founder of the British Aircraft Corporation in 1960 Gibson was given responsibility for the growing weight of recruitment advertising. This led to his becoming managing director of a new advertising agency, Gibson, Gilbert & White.

When that became a take-over victim he and some colleagues broke away to form Davis Gibson Advertising, largely with money raised by

mongaging his home. DGA became responsible for all BAC advertising worldwide. Its work for the corporation and its successor, British Aerospace, for other aerospace clients such as the Society of British Aerospace Companies (the Farmborough airshow organisers), and for airlines such as British United Airways, British Eagle International, Laker Airways, Gulf Air and North-

west, one of the leading US international carriers, provided the main opportunity and outlet for Gibson's unique skills as a photographer, in which his early pilot training played a key part.



MARY GOUGH

herself, at the age of 14 and, after a varied education in Switzerland and Harpenden, enrolled to study naval architecture at Devonport and Plymouth Technical Colleges. In 1933 she was employed at Gray's Yard, West Hartlepool, designing tramp steamers, some of which are said still to be in service in the eastern Mediterranean.

Despite her success in a male-dominated career structure, she felt frustrated by the bias on advancement operating against women, and by the outbreak of war had left ship design to drive ambulances in Notting Hill during the Blitz. She was recruited by the Admiralty to top secret work at Bletchley, where she exploited her naval experience and qualifications, helping to plan the routes of convoys crossing the North Atlantic.

In 1946 she married Major Michael Gough (Royal Artillery). In the spring of 1949, after the completion of his interrupted studies, Gough set off for Turkey, the first of many journeys to a country which

was to become the main interest of her life. The Goughs were almost penniless and often travelled in conditions of extreme discomfort. Mary claimed a secondary role, announcing that she was a draughtsman not

an archaeologist, but the publication of *The Plain and the Rough Places* in 1954 established her as a writer. Her book is still essential reading for anyone wanting to understand the character of life in southern Anatolia.

For more than 20 years the Goughs carried out research together in Turkey culminating in the excavations at Alahan. Michael's academic career took them to Edinburgh, Ankara and Toronto. Mary continued writing, contributing articles on Turkey to *Blackwood's Magazine* and the *Illustrated London News*. She was tireless in trying to improve Anglo-Turkish relations and regularly broadcast for the BBC in English about Turkey, and for the Overseas Service in Turkish about Britain.

After Michael Gough's untimely death in 1974 she completed the study of the important early Christian site of Alahan in the Taurus mountains. Mary Gough ordered and organised the study of the finds from Alahan and edited the final report. *Alahan, an Early Christian Monastery in Southern Turkey* (1985). Her own vital contribution, which disproved her claims about not being an archaeologist, was self-evidently not acknowledged in the list of contents. She is owed a great debt for bringing into print the major study of a monument which serves as a vital link in understanding the complicated processes of transition from Roman to medieval architecture. The East Church of Alahan was a "domed Basilica" erected by the Emperor Zeno half a century before its much more famous successor, Santa Sophia in Constantinople.

Her last years were spent in her native Devonshire where she was a strong supporter of Kingswear Church. She never lost her enthusiasm for Turkey. Until recently she guided tours of the country and she was on the council of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara when she died.

She is survived by her son, Leo.

Carducci, poet, Nobel laureate 1906, Bologna, 1907; Leslie Hore-Belisha, statesman, the man behind Belisha beacons, 1957. Chaim Weizmann became the first president of the state of Israel, 1949. Fidel Castro became premier of Cuba, 1959.

Appointments

Mr David Beatty to be HM Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation.

Lord St John of Fawley to be reappointed a member of the Royal Fine Art Commission on the expiry of his present term.

University news

Durham
The following are to receive honorary degrees in July:
Doctor of Civil Law: Sir Ron Dearing, public servant in higher education and industry.
Doctor of Science: Professor Sir John Cadogan, chemist and writer.
Doctor of Letters: Richard L. Hill, scholar and administrator.
Master of Arts: J. Donald Robson, councillor and chairman of Durham County Cricket Club.
Honorary degrees will be awarded to the following in December:
Doctor of Civil Law: Dr William Gaines, President of the Institute

of European Studies.
Master of Science: Fenwick Hutchinson, university woodman.
Daedae
The honorary degree of Doctor of Laws is to be awarded to Dr Donald Broadbent, formerly Director of the MRC Applied Psychology Unit, Cambridge University; Mr Roger Gibbs, Chairman of Wellcome Trust; Sir Douglas Hardie, chairman of Grampian TV; Professor Roslyn Higgins, Professor of International Law, LS2; Sir Robert Kilpatrick, President of the General Medical Council; Irene Makovec, architect.

Weekend anniversaries

Braunschweig, Germany, 1781: Births: Philipp Melanchthon, theologian, Bretton, Hanse, 1497; Galileo Galilei, mathematician and astronomer, Pisa, 1564; Jeremy Bentham, Utilitarian philosopher, London, 1748; Alfred North Whitehead, philosopher, Ramsay, 1861; Sir Banister Fletcher, architect and architectural historian, London, 1866; Sir Ernest Shackleton, Antarctic explorer, Kilke, Co Clare, 1874; H.M. Bateman, cartoonist, Moss Vale, New South Wales, 1887.

Deaths: Jan Swammerdam, entomologist, Amsterdam, 1680; Gottlieb Lessing, dramatist,

Not enough royal regiments to go round

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

AT BRITAIN'S imperial peak about 100 years ago, there were not enough members of the royal family to go round for the 31 cavalry and 113 infantry regiments in the British Army. Today, there are not enough regiments left to share equally among them.

Yesterday the Queen announced a new list of colonels-in-chief for 11 regiments which are being formed out of 22 existing regiments. She has been trying to decide which members of her family should step aside from their regimental obligations ever since the government announced the cutback in infantry battalions and armoured regiments in July last year.

The naming of new royal colonels-in-chief is the latest development in the gradual personality change affecting some of Britain's most famous regiments. When the government's Options for Change defence cuts are implemented, reducing the army from 156,000 to 116,000 men and women, there will be only nine cavalry, two royal tank and 29 infantry regiments. The distribution of royal colonels-in-chief was more of a sensitive task for the Queen.

The merging regiments had the right to decide their preferences, which were passed on to the

Queen by Major-General Brian Pennicott. As the defence services secretary, he acts as liaison between defence ministry and Buckingham Palace on all royal matters.

Although most of the new appointments announced yesterday were made necessary because of the defence cuts, some army units were granted royal patronage for the first time in honour of the 40th anniversary of the Queen's accession. The Army Air Corps is to have the Prince of Wales as its first colonel-in-chief.

Where members of the royal family have lost out, the Queen has appointed some of them deputy colonels-in-chief ten in all. For example, with the amalgamation of The Queen's Own Hussars and The Queen's Royal Irish Hussars, the Queen Mother becomes colonel-in-chief of the new regiment, The Queen's Royal Hussars. The Duke of Edinburgh, losing a regiment, becomes deputy colonel-in-chief.

The Queen keeps her colonelcies, although she is involved in one amalgamation, that of the 16th/5th The Queen's Royal Lancers and the 17th/21st Lancers.

The Princess Royal is to be colonel-in-chief of the new Royal Logistic Corps.



Top gun: the Prince of Wales is to be the Army Air Corps' first colonel-in-chief.



Review time: the Queen has granted patronage to some units to mark her accession



Leading from the front: the Princess Royal and the Duke of Edinburgh

Inflation fall gives ministers a boost

Continued from page 1
the January sales. Mr Lamont accepted that the output figures were disappointing, but said: "Only low inflation can bring the sustainable growth in jobs and output we all want to see."

"It is low inflation that will most surely lay the groundwork for future rises in output and for more jobs. Britain is now on course for permanently low inflation. We are in sight of victory over the key underlying problem that has dogged the British economy for decades ... it is that victory that will lead to economic recovery."

Alan Beith, the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, said: "While Britain is suffering from a recession far worse than anywhere else in the Western world ... our inflation performance remains no better than average."

Labour continued to try to put the blame for the recession on John Major. Roy Hattersley, Labour's deputy leader, said in Birmingham that he had not proposed a single policy "to help put right the tragedy which he has caused", adding: "As the economy continues on its downward spiral, John Major stands like a frightened rabbit, dazed in the headlights of his certain destruction."

The Conservatives have a 2.5-point lead over Labour, according to a Gallup poll in *The Daily Telegraph* today. A similar poll last week gave them a five-point lead. The survey, involving interviews with 2,012 people, also shows a 3.5-point rise in support for the Liberal Democrats over the previous week. The poll was conducted in the week up to Tuesday — before the so-called "Black Thursday" and the battery of unfavourable economic statistics. The poll put the Conservatives on 40 per cent, Labour 37.5 per cent and the Liberal Democrats 17.5 per cent.

How MPs voted, page 7

Recession deepens, page 17

Hitler's scientists shocked by bomb

Continued from page 1

uranium bomb. Just imagine, if we had destroyed London with uranium bombs. It would not have ended the war, and when the war did end, it is doubtful if it would have been a good thing."

The man who took the news hardest was Gerlich. Rittner says that he saw suicide as the only honourable course, but he lacked a gun with which to kill himself, and was eventually calmed down.

The Farm Hall transcripts

have long been one of the mysteries of the war. Although they were quoted by General Groves, head of the allied Manhattan Project, in his account of the making of the atom bomb, their existence has at times been denied by British officials.

The Germans speculated about whether the rooms were fitted with microphones. Heisenberg said: "Microphones installed? (Laughing) Oh no, they're not as nice as that. I don't think they know the real Gestapo methods. They're a bit old-fashioned."

One reason why they had not emerged sooner, he said, was because it had been thought disreputable to publish them. "If it was a discussion to bug them, it was only a small one, because we were saving them from being shot by bringing them to England," he said.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Animals said: "We have won the argument in the country at large. We are sure that in the next parliament, a ban on hunting will become law."

Colin Cullimore, director of the Campaign for Hunting, said: "People have realised the effect on the social back-

ground of rural England of removing country sports."

Sir Teddy Taylor, Conservative MP for Southend East, who acted as unofficial whip for Tories supporting the bill, said: "The change in opinion since the last time shows that fox-hunting is on the way out."

Conservatives supporting the bill included Alan Clark, the defence procurement minister; junior social security minister, Graham Bright; John Major's parliamentary private secretary, and two whips

Greg Knight and John Taylor. No Labour MPs voted against the bill.

Labour MPs were claiming last night that the Conservatives had been unwise to vote down a bill which would have had no chance of becoming law. A shadow cabinet member said: "All the surveys show the public does not like fox-hunting. This could be worth 1,000 votes to us in every constituency."

The debate was marked by emotive language on both sides. Mr McNamara said: "My bill has a very simple

Anti-hunting bill defeated by 12 votes

Continued from page 1

Upminster and chairman of the British Field Sports Society, said: "I am much more confident now ... that the war will be won and our message will be carried through."

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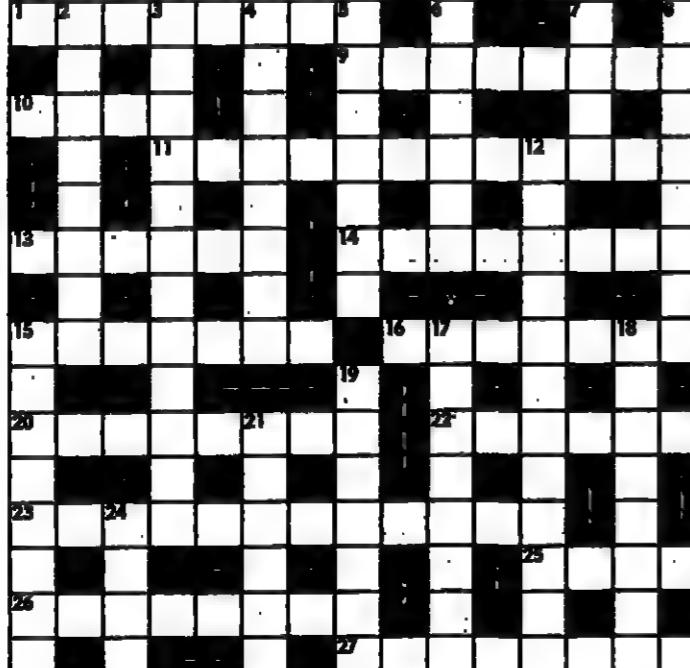
purpose: to correct the anomaly which exists in law which permits people to wilfully inflict on a wild mammal an act of cruelty which would be criminal if it was inflicted upon a domestic animal."

Nicholas Ridley, the former cabinet minister, said: "If I have a complaint about hunting, it is that they don't kill enough foxes". Robin Corbett promised that a Labour government would swiftly introduce a bill to end hunting with hounds.

How MPs voted, page 7

Recession deepens, page 17

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,842



By Philip Howard

GEPHYROPHOBIA

a. Fear of old ones

b. Neurosis that one is going bald

c. Fear of bridges

BVRNIE

a. Walking stool

b. Chain mail armour

POGNOSTICS

a. A form of divination

b. Having too much board

c. Sympathetic geomancy

HOUSEL

a. During the Eucharist

b. To give a license to

c. The Bedesmen

Answers on page 14

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0886 401, followed by the appropriate code.

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C. London (within N & S Circ) 731

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M-ways/roads M1-Carford T 733

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M-ways/roads M23-M4 735

M25 London Orbital only 736

National

National motorways 737

West Country 738

Midlands 740

East Anglia 741

North-west England 742

North-east England 743

Scotland 744

Northern Ireland 745

ACROSS

- 1 This queen is one murdered by the French (8).
- 2 Simple fellow meets 1 ac, a seller of benefits (8).
- 3 Like Pickwick, for example, a sight when at rest (12).
- 4 "On the Beach" as written for the listener (8).
- 5 Drink prepared in baths (7).
- 6 Doctor introduces musical yarn (6).
- 7 Car taking road to the six counties (4).
- 8 Turned extremely hazy, perhaps, with rumblings of a storm (8).
- 9 Apt. development before many, with rumblings of a storm (8).
- 10 Annoyed about unknown Scotman climbing tree (8).
- 11 Desire simply in a lecherous way (8).
- 12 Unnecessary to change the Head for being negligent (8).
- 13 Funny man accepting arts award? It means just the opposite (7).
- 14 Another drink, perhaps? Good reason for abandoning the game (6).
- 15 Head of School behaves obsequiously, but puts down bad characters (7).
- 16 Dark horse on the right coming in bend (7).
- 20 Vessel, say, named by a short fellow? (8).
- 22 A pound found in an under-garment (6).
- 23 The princess's single attendant is a tart (4,2,6).
- 25 Contest appropriate to a politician (4).
- 26 Mischiefvous associate of some old servicemen (8).
- 27 Local VIP's confusion about opera opening in Scotch port (8).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,836

PRECIS **HARDSHIP**
E O W E I O S E
B A R N D O O R MAGGOT
P T R B M S R
S P O R A D I C B O O H C O
B A F H N E N E N
A RAILROAD A E
GRAY S I R IDOL
A I CHESSMEN X
M U O T A C B
GAMINE OLD GUARD
S I C P I G I
TINKER HOLLANDS
E U R E L Y G
ROMANCER OPENER

A prize of a superb Parker Duofold International Fountain Pen, with an 18 carat gold nib and fully guaranteed for the lifetime of the original owner will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday. Name/Address.....

SHEEPSHANK OFAL

D E R A I L O O

C L E R E TORY PLEA

K N D E S S I N

F I D D L E S T I C K S

O I L M R E H

M I N N E S O T A E X T R A

N T C S I E R R

I N S E T B I D E T R A C K

S R I I C P S

C O M M O N F A C T O R

E N R U R B H

E R N E M A R T I N G A L E

H T Q G I E I E

T A S K P E N E T R A T E D

Inflation
fall in
minister
a book

- BUSINESS NEWS 17-20, 27, 28
- WEEKEND MONEY 21-26
- SPORT 29-34

THE TIMES BUSINESS

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

17



Profile

Hero worship among male board members at Amstrad takes the form of designer stubble beards that make them look like Alan Sugar, chairman of the computer technology company. Sugar is now worth between £60 million and £70 million, but before the 1987 crash he was worth almost £600 million..... Page 19



Buyer beware

Anyone who buys or is left a property could find themselves insuring against the bankruptcy of the former owner. Courts have powers to seize homes to pay off creditors..... Page 25

Evasive action

Many of last year's 22,632 bankrupts could have avoided the situation had they opted for an individual voluntary arrangement between debtors and creditors..... Page 25



Lenters..... Page 26

Tax battle

Barbara Michaels had a weekly pension in her own right but she and her husband Maurice were taxed as if the pension was being paid to the husband for his wife. The subsequent battle for refund of £682.44 overpaid tax has taken the best part of a year and resulted in an extra accountant's bill of £268. The Revenue has refused to make an ex gratia payment. The Revenue has this week promised improved service in its customers' charter..... Page 23



Going for broke

Private client stockbrokers are fighting for survival. Many brokers have started charging fees rather than commission while others are offering execution only services..... Page 24



Due care

The Investors Compensation Scheme could face renewed investigation of its handling of an investor's claim for compensation if the trade secretary decides to reopen the file..... Page 22

Production data worse than expected

Factory output falls to new recession low

BY ANATOLE KALETSKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

BRITAIN'S economy slid deeper into recession in December, as manufacturing resumed the erratic decline that was briefly interrupted by the false dawns of the spring and early autumn. The worse than expected figures on manufacturing output, published yesterday by the Central Statistical Office, rounded off a week of grim economic news suggesting that the present recession would be the longest in post-war history and that the end was not yet in sight.

However, government ministers took consolation from a fall in the rate of inflation to 4.1 per cent in January from 4.5 per cent the previous month. Some analysts speculated that the past week's combination of good inflation figures and poor output and employment data might prompt a half-point cut in interest rates before the Budget. Others noted, however, that sterling remained pinned to the floor of the European exchange-rate mechanism by the strength of the Spanish peseta. They argued the Chancellor would want to wait until the Budget, when he might have a chance of launching the government's re-election campaign with a full-point cut.

Yesterday's production fig-

ures showed that the index of manufacturing output fell 0.3 per cent in December to a new recession low of 110.8. December's manufacturing output was the lowest since February 1988.

However, officials noted that the fall in manufacturing output between November and December was essentially a reversal of the 0.2 per cent rise the previous month. Taking the fourth quarter as a whole, output had shown signs of stability, but this came after the manufacturing sector took another "step downwards in October".

Comparing the average output level in the last three months of the year with three months earlier, the technique used by the CSO to iron out economically insignificant fluctuations, the latest figures showed a decline of 1.2 per cent, equivalent to an annual rate of almost 5 per cent.

Government statisticians said their best estimate of the underlying trend showed manufacturing output falling at an annual rate of about 3 per cent. This decline was the same as the estimate in November, but contrasted with the CSO's assessments in early autumn, when statisticians believed the manufacturing decline had ended.

For 1991 as a whole, manufac-

turing output showed a decline of 5.3 per cent compared with a year earlier.

Inflation falls, page 1

Official noted that the fall in manufacturing during the present recession had been smaller than in the recessions of 1979-81 and 1974-75, although they conceded the decline might not yet be over.

Manufacturing in the last three months was about 8 per cent below the cyclical peak in the second quarter of 1990.

The peak-to-trough fall in the last recession was 15 per cent.

In the engineering sector, which has been worse hit in the past year than chemicals and other manufacturing industries, the peak-to-trough decline of about 12 per cent in the present recession was "starting to approach" the fall suffered last time.

Yesterday's output figures suggested there would be further bad news for the economy next Thursday when the gross domestic product for the fourth quarter and all of 1991 is due to be published.

The index of industrial production, which includes energy and water production, as well as manufacturing, fell 0.1 per cent in the last three months of 1991 compared with the three months before.

Excluding North Sea oil and gas production, which rose 2.1 per cent during the quarter, this index, which dominates the changes in the quarterly GDP figures, would

show a substantial fall.

The job losses which in-

clude more than 200 contract

staff, affect nearly half the highly skilled engineers who are responsible for design and construction of British Nuclear's thermal oxide reprocessing plant at Sellafield in Cumbria.

At the same time, Glynwood, the engineering group, said it was to shed 200 jobs in Great Bridge, Birmingham. NEI,

the power engineering arm of

aeroengine group Rolls-Royce, is also to shed 300 workers in West Bromwich.

And more than 700 jobs

are at risk across the country after receivers were called in to ELS, the furniture retailing arm of the Greater Nottingham Co-operative Society.

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Employment was poised to shed 900 staff after a review of supervisory arrangements for Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs).

Half of the jobs would go at

the supervisory headquarters in Sheffield, the union said,

and the rest would affect local advisory officers.

The department said it

could not trace the document

and a spokeswoman said no decision on staff numbers had yet been made.

Yesterday's announce-

ments bring this week's total of job losses at leading British companies to more than 6,500. These figures have yet to feed through into the unemployment figures, which in

January increased by

122,137 to 2,673,864.

American industry still in decline

BY COLIN MARSHALL, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

AMERICAN industry, which last year appeared to be leading the economy out of recession, suffered a 0.9 per cent drop in output in January, according to the latest government figures. The January fall was the third consecutive drop and the biggest one-month fall for a year.

The production figures are likely to dampen hopes that the glint of recovery seen in retail sales data on Thursday heralds broader-based recovery.

The fall in industrial output was spread across all sectors, but the car industry reported the biggest decline.

The January fall was attributed mainly to lower petrol and heating oil prices. Excluding food and energy prices rose 0.3 per cent.

The currency market reacted to yesterday's data by initially marking the dollar sharply lower, to about DM1.6290, before allowing it to bounce back later.

The fall in wholesale prices is likely to erode any lingering concern that the authorities might have about a resurgence of inflation.

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Surprise as WPP surges

BY MARTIN WALLACE

SHARES in WPP Group, the advertising company headed by Martin Sorrell, jumped 37p to 95p on the stock market yesterday as a wave of buying out of New York triggered defensive marking up by British brokers.

The shares later subsided to end 25p above at 83p, bringing the rise in the past two days to 35p. Neither the company nor London analysts were able to explain the rise, which came after the equivalent of 2 per cent of the company's share capital was traded in New York on Thursday evening. WPP denied speculation that it was about to sell the Ogilvy & Mather advertising agency.

London analysts say that New York investors were buying on the back of a fragile recovery in the American advertising market.

The group is, however, downgrading pension increases under the schemes. These were recently raised to 5 per cent a year and will in future

be 3 per cent a year until circumstances allow changes.

Paul Stannard of Travers Smith Braithwaite, the solicitor of the pension funds' trustees, said: "Obviously the ideal would be for the pension scheme to be put back immediately into a fully funded position. But this is just a pipe dream. The harsh reality is that the pension scheme has been plundered and no one is able to fill the hole overnight."

Under the original Mirror pension funds' trust deeds, schemes are bound to pay out pensions first and then to meet the guaranteed minimum pension entitlements of employees.

There are insufficient funds to meet the payments of existing pensions. If enough money were not recovered to pay these guaranteed pensions, Mr Stannard believes the government would foot the bill.

The exact cost to the group of this commitment is not known but will make it less attractive to a purchaser.

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THE BLUE ARROW TRIAL

Flawed superdeal marked passing of an era

FEW eras can have dated as quickly as that of the late-Eighties. The summer of 1987 was less than five years ago, but it feels more like five decades. Business was booming, big was best, and the City of London was desperate for a slice of the action. Taking part counted for nothing, it was winning that was vital.

No one wanted to win as much as the principal participants in the Blue Arrow affair. Never had the stakes been higher. At £837 million, the rights issue that Blue Arrow launched to pay for the acquisition of Manpower was — and still is — the biggest the City had ever seen.

In the deal-hungry world that the City's merchant banking community had become, it was a right issue to die for. Get it right and the fees and commissions would run to tens of millions of pounds, and could open the door to even larger and more lucrative deals. Get it wrong, and...

But failure was not to be contemplated. The Brits were back on the world's financial stage, determined to show they could take on anyone and win — whatever the cost.

In the summer of 1987, a leading player on that stage was Tony Berry, whose ascent from modest beginnings to chairman of the Blue Arrow employment agency group, encapsulated everything that Thatcherite Britain stood for. Blue Arrow was one of the decade's great success stories. In just three years, its stock market valuation had soared from £3 million to £450 million. But, having reached the top in Britain, Mr Berry did not want to stop.

Casting his eyes across the Atlantic he found Manpower, the thriving, Milwaukee employment agency group run by Mitchell Fromstein. Mr Berry came, saw and, a brief but spectacular battle later, conquered, agreeing to pay £800 million for Manpower. Blue Arrow had become the biggest employment agency group in the world.

All that was left to sort out:

The biggest rights issue the City of London had ever seen was to turn into the mother of all hangovers for most of the players involved, Matthew Bond reports



The guilty men: David Reed, County NatWest; Jonathan Cohen, NatWest Investment Bank; Martin Gibbs and Nicholas Wells, Phillips and Drew;

was the minor matter of Britain's biggest ever rights issue.

County NatWest was the merchant bank with the Blue Arrow business. Despite its well known high street parent, County was a new kid on the City block and determined to deal its way into the big time. The Blue Arrow rights issue was the big chance and it was not going to go wrong.

But things did not go according to plan. The house of cards that would collapse two months later on Black Monday was already starting to shake.

A stock market that had seemed locked in top gear began to falter. Two thirds of a smaller, £214 million rights issue that enabled WPP to buy J Walter Thompson was left with its sub-underwriters. As the closing date for Blue Arrow acceptances neared, interest rates unexpectedly rose, causing further uncertainty in the stock market.

On the evening of September 28, Mr Berry's advisers from County NatWest and Phillips & Drew, Blue Arrow's stockbroker, met at County's Drapers' Gardens headquarters to discover how the rights issue had fared.

The extraordinary decisions arrived at that night took just a few hours. But it has taken 12 jurors a year to hear the evidence that led them to the verdict that four of the five defendants were guilty of conspiring to rig the stock market.

At that meeting were four of the five defendants. From County NatWest there was Nicholas Wells, the young merchant banker leading the Blue Arrow rights issue and David Reed, Mr Wells' immediate boss. From UBS Phillips & Drew were two corporate financiers — Martin Gibbs, who headed the finance team, and Christopher Staniforth, also of P&D and the one defendant to be acquitted yesterday.

Earlier in the trial, the charges against two other individuals, Alan Keat, a partner at Travers Smith Braithwaite, the solicitor, and Stephen Clark, group finance director at County NatWest, were dropped. The cases against County NatWest, NatWest Investment Bank, and UBS Phillips & Drew Securities were also dropped.

The fifth remaining defendant, Jonathan Cohen, then-deputy chief executive of NatWest Investment Bank, and chief executive of County NatWest, was not at the meeting but according to the prosecution was informed by telephone of the decisions taken that evening and gave his assent. Mr Cohen had denied this but was found guilty by the jury.

By the middle of the evening it was clear that the rights issue had flopped, with only 38 per cent of it taken up by existing shareholders. Blue Arrow was unaffected, because the issue was underwritten, effectively guarantee-

ing the money. Mr Berry could still buy Manpower, although Blue Arrow could be left with a distinctly soggy share price for months, even years, if the unwanted shares passed to the underwriters.

In the City this phenomenon is sometimes referred to as "rights issue hangover". Given the size of the issue, Blue Arrow was heading for the mother of all headaches.

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Memorably, Mr Berry was dispatched to have supper, while the bankers worked on a way out of the mess. Mr Berry was therefore not a party to the conspiracy that followed.

The alternative to the surplus shares being left with the underwriters and sub-

underwriters was to place the stock with institutions. But, said the P&D men whose sales force would handle such a placing, the institutions would have to be convinced that the rights issue had been comparatively successful and that a prolonged "hangover" was therefore unlikely. To be convincing the take-up would have to be closer to 50 per cent, not 38 per cent.

With time running out the bankers took the now infamous decision that if a near 50 per cent take-up was what was needed, then a near 50 per cent take-up was what the market would get.

So in the wee small hours of September 28, 1987 — crucially after the official deadline for rights issue acceptances had closed — County NatWest and UBS Phillips & Drew each became the owners of 4 per cent of the issue with Dillon Read, Blue Arrow's American adviser, taking 2 per cent.

By the time P&D's equity

salesman assembled for the 7.30 am meeting the next day, the rights issue take-up had risen to 48.9 per cent. But even then the subsequent placing did not go smoothly, with County & P&D being forced into taking another 5 million shares each, according to the findings of the Department of Trade and Industry investigation.

But what was 5 million shares between friends. The important thing was that success had been plucked from disaster. Within an hour of the placing's "completion", a press release was issued, giving details of the level of take-up and the subsequent full placing of the remaining shares. It was this press release that the prosecution argued was actively misleading.

A few days later P&D described the placing as "successful" in a full page newspaper advertisement. Once again, the prosecution said, misleading. Later that day, Mr Berry was in ebullient, if

prophetic, form. "Today has been a brilliant success, and as a result we have what amounts to a completely new shareholders' register of people who believe in what we are hoping to achieve in the future."

Chief among those new shareholders following the late night meeting, were County NatWest, which owned 13.4 per cent of Blue Arrow. This however was quickly reduced, when a 3.9 per cent stake was placed with UBS, P&D's Swiss parent, its transfer eased by an indemnity against any loss on the Swiss bank holding the stake. P&D already owned almost 5 per cent in its own right.

At a time when the level at which a share stake had to be declared was 5 per cent, it was arranged for County to hold 4.99 per cent on its own account and to place the remaining 4.4 per cent with County NatWest Securities, its market making arm.

Within three weeks the stock market crash had ensured that County and P&D were sitting on huge paper losses on the Blue Arrow shares. Two months later County reported a £69 million loss on its share transactions, including a £49 million paper loss on its Blue Arrow stake.

But the damage to careers has been just as extensive. Mr Cohen moved to Charnhouse Bank, but later resigned apparently bowing to pressure from the Bank of England. Mr Wells moved to BZW, but like David Reed, who had remained at County, resigned in 1989 after publication of the damning DTI report. Mr Gibbs retired from P&D in 1988 having reached the age of 60 while Mr Staniforth, acquitted yesterday, resigned from P&D after the DTI report.

The four men found guilty yesterday played to win at all costs. Next week they will find out just what those costs are when they return to the court for sentencing.

Convictions, page 1

Germany lifts VAT to 15% in tax package

BY WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU
EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

THE upper house of the German parliament has voted in favour of a wide-ranging tax package, under which value-added tax will rise by 1 percentage point to 15 per cent next year.

The agreement brings to an end months of fiscal uncertainty and bitter wrangling between the political parties, but has it also raised fears among economists that the present inflationary pressures and the resulting high rates of interest might be carried well into next year.

There is added concern that the measures will result in an extra financial burden and an increase in the budget deficit.

Other elements of the tax package agreed by the German *Bundestag* yesterday include a reshuffle in the system of corporate taxation for the benefit mainly of small to medium companies, and a rise in child allowances.

Theo Waigel, the finance minister, pushed his proposal through the *Bundestag*, after successfully negotiating a last-minute compromise with the state premier of Brandenburg, one of the pivotal SPD states whose backing for the tax package finally carried the *Bundestag* vote.

The package won 35 votes, the minimum number for an absolute majority, and comes a day after acceptance by the



In line: Tony Edwards has stepped up to become group managing director

Lucas selects heir apparent

BY ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

LUCAS Industries, one of Britain's largest car parts makers, has selected an aerospace expert who joined the company little more than two years ago as heir apparent to the chief executive.

Tony Edwards, aged 47, has been appointed group managing director. He joined Lucas in September 1989 from Bombardier, the Canadian train and aircraft maker, as managing director of the aerospace business.

Appointment as group managing director is a traditional device to secure a smooth transition of power within Lucas. Sir Anthony

Gill, the present chairman and chief executive, was group managing director before succeeding Sir Godfrey Messervy as chairman and chief executive in the early Eighties. This time, Lucas is thought to be intending to separate the roles. Sources at the company indicate it is likely to seek an external candidate for the role of non-executive chairman when Sir Anthony retires.

Sir Anthony, aged 61, was scheduled to retire at the end of this year. He has agreed to remain as chairman until the end of 1994. However, he is to stand down as chief execu-

tive earlier — possibly at the end of this year.

The appointment reflects satisfaction at Lucas at the way Sir Anthony built up the aerospace business, and with Mr Edwards's success in uniting an international business largely created by acquisition.

Mr Edwards, a production engineer by training, started with Rolls-Royce, the aero-engine maker, in Derby. He spent 14 years at General Electric, the American aero-engine company, becoming president of Canadair Aerospace Group, Bombardier's aircraft manufacturing arm.

Economists have expressed scepticism about the package, however. Helmut Kaiser, head of research at Deutsche Bank, said the rise in VAT "will mean a sudden jump in the retail price index of 0.6 points in January 1993, since one expects that the rise in VAT will translate completely into prices".

This would mean that inflation will not fall under 3.5 per cent in 1993, even on an optimistic scenario, under which the mark remains strong against the dollar and wages rise only moderately this year. Dr Kaiser also cast doubt over the ministry's pledge that the corporate tax reform will turn out to be fiscally neutral.

Disney loses to CBS in studio battle

BY MARTIN WALLER

BURT Reynolds has beaten Mickey Mouse for the ownership of a Californian film studio put up for sale by TVS Entertainment, which lost the south of England broadcasting franchise in the October bidding round.

More specifically, CBS, the American broadcaster, has stepped in and exercised its option to take the half stake in the studio with MTM of *Evening Shade*, starring Burt Reynolds, which has just started on British television.

CBS is likely to complete the purchase within two months. TVS made no com-

ment on the switch of ownership, but the company was believed to be pleased, not least because it can expect to receive the money earlier from CBS as Disney is known in show business circles for driving a hard bargain and the eventual price was subject to a complicated due diligence procedure.

The decision by CBS to exercise its option and buy the rest of the studio appears to have taken TVS and Disney by surprise. MTM was anxious to ensure continued access to the studio for further

Nikkei plunges after arrests

FROM REUTER IN TOKYO

POLITICAL scandals outweighed expressions of political support for the Tokyo stock market, which greeted plans to revitalise it with another sharp dive.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party approved proposals for higher dividend ratios, lower taxes on stock trading and other measures designed to lure investors back to the market. However, the nearly simultaneous arrest of four businessmen linked to a scandal overshadowed the LDP initiative, pushing the key Nikkei share average down 507.16 points to 20,883.86, its second-lowest close since October 1990.

The Big Four Japanese brokerage houses on Thursday unveiled their proposals to make the market more attractive by raising dividends and relaxing some trading regulations.

Last week, the Osaka Securities Exchange revised rules on futures and options trade to reduce volatility.

While Tsurutani Hata, the finance minister, said one of his ministry's main objectives was to rebuild investor confidence, he rejected calls for a discount rate cut. The central bank last lowered the key rate 0.5 of a percentage point to 4.5 per cent on December 30.

The government, meanwhile, is increasingly paralysed by scandals. The latest involves the former chief of a tracking firm suspected of funneling money to gangsters and politicians.

Latest scandal, page 11

Lancastrian to merge with Northern Rock

THE Northern Rock Building Society has been called upon by the Building Societies Commission to rescue the 12-branch Lancastrian Building Society ahead of the £300 million Lancastrian reporting a loss for 1991. The merger was announced yesterday after the £4.5 billion Northern Rock had put in place a substantial standby facility for the Lancastrian. In 1990 the society had to report a loss and take back £1.5 million from its general reserves after writing off goodwill purchased with its estate agencies.

The 1991 Lancastrian accounts are "likely to show a small deficit," said Adam Applegarth, assistant general manager at Northern Rock. The Lancastrian had commercial loans of £25 million and some of these have gone bad.

Headlam acquisition

HEADLAM Group, a footwear and fabrics company, is buying three domestic floor covering businesses from Hickson International for £5.36 million. It is funding the acquisitions through a £5.1 million share placing and open offer. The businesses form HPD (South), operating profits of which fell from £1.33 million to £917,000 last year on sales down from £25.02 million to £23.22 million. Headlam has promised to pay a final dividend of 1.65p a share, which would make an unchanged total payout of 2.4p.

Souza Cruz ahead

SOUZA CRUZ, BAT Industries' Brazilian subsidiary, reported sharply higher profits for 1991 even though two operating groups returned losses. Net profit was \$4.79 billion cruzeiros (£21.52 million) up from £12.43 billion cruzeiros in 1990, helped by a recovery in financial income and some relaxation of the state-imposed price freeze later in the year. Paper and pulp lost 14.29 billion cruzeiros (50.54 billion cruzeiros profit). Fruit juice activities lost 857 million cruzeiros (107 million cruzeiro loss).

VW sales defy slump

CAR deliveries at Volkswagen rose by 100,000 to 3.13 million last year despite the international downturn in the car market, according to preliminary figures released by VW yesterday. The rise in sales came in response to strong domestic demand, with domestic deliveries rising from 945,000 to 1.25 million. VW international sales fell by 210,000 to 1.88 million, but the company said European market share rose from 16 per cent to 16.4 per cent. VW is Europe's largest carmaker, ahead of Fiat of Italy.

Steetley bid extended

THE takeover panel has further extended the timetable for the hostile bid for Steetley by Redland, a fellow building materials producer, pending a ruling on whether the offer should go to the monopolies commission. The panel will now reconsider the bid timetable if there is no ruling on a reference from the trade department by March 12, or if the offer is referred, unless Redland is prepared to make undertakings on disposals. Analysts expect the department to decide on Wednesday whether to refer the bid.

Hoesch fall halted

HOESCH, the German steel and engineering group, expects operating profits of well above DM200 million this year after DM440 million in 1990. Hoesch said it had halted a decline in earnings in the fourth quarter of 1991, allowing it to report satisfactory results for the full year. The steel division is expected to break even, despite massive price declines in nearly all product groups, and production standstills due to construction work. Hoesch made no forecast for 1992 earnings or sales.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

We didn't go on a crazy acquisition run like other 1980s entrepreneurs who borrowed to buy companies and got lumbered with the interest charges. Amstrad won't have banks jumping on our backs. We got cash...
Alan Sugar in Business, The Sunday Times tomorrow

BUSINESS PROFILE: Alan Sugar

Street fighter with a nose for survival

Spurs helped the Amstrad chairman bring his thinking back down to earth, as Carol Leonard finds out

Something strange has been happening in the Amstrad boardroom. Several directors have sprouted beards. Not the full, ethnic type, more the designer-stubble type, and makes them look just like Alan Sugar, the company's chairman. In some instances the resemblance is so strong, they could almost be clones.

"I knew you were going to say that," Ann Sugar, Alan's wife of 24 years, says. "There are a lot of beards there and I'm sure most of them didn't have them when they joined." Mrs Sugar has an air of resignation as she speaks. She is clearly used to people hero-worshipping her husband, be they colleagues or friends.

"Yes, he is surrounded by clones," Stanley Kalms, the chairman of Dixons, who first encountered Sugar ten years ago, says. "They have been very loyal. But they are also a bit like a court in that they will ask him to repeat some funny story, and then laugh louder each time they hear it." Sugar himself claims to find his fame tiresome. He complains that complete strangers stop him whenever he goes. "You can see them coming from the corner of your eye. He or she has been staring at you all night. No, not plucking up courage, these people are the worst, they are

rude, they butt in, they have no common courtesy at all. They say something like 'You know my uncle in Hackney.' I say 'Oh, really? Yes, he says you know him very well.'

Then they rattle off a name. I say: 'No, I don't know him. I've never heard of him.' 'Oh, but you do know him.' 'I don't know him. I'm sorry.'

'But you went to school with him, you must know him.' Then I get a bit annoyed. Yes, sometimes I can be rude. I would probably say 'Well,

I don't know him so clear off,' or words to that effect." Sugar laughs.

He loves to re-enact conversations.

His wife says he enjoys being-in-the-spotlight, so much so that he ought to be on the stage. But he sweats too

readily and is too aggressive ever to

If it's a do for 2,000 people then it can be binned. If it's for ten, then I had better go. It's a case of whether my absence will be noticed'

person in Britain, worth almost £600 million. The 1987 stock market crash reduced its value to £197 million — with a record fall of £400 million in one day — and the company's fortunes have never fully recovered. Its shares now trade at about 30p, against an asset value of 53p.

Sugar is philosophical about the change in his so-called worth. He can afford to be. Apart from his Amstrad shares, he is, he says, worth between £60 million and £70 million.

"There are two different things which you've got to get clear in your mind. One is what you've actually got-in-hard-cash-and-assets and the other is what people say you

are worth and that fluctuates with the weather. It's basically shares,



Plain talking: Alan Sugar admits to an explosive temper, that he hates wimps and is irreverent

and I have always totally ignored it. It's flattering but you haven't got it and so it's irrelevant."

Sugar has a knack of simplifying everything. He sees the world in terms of black and white. He never allows any room for muddling.

Some people call this tunnel vision, saying that he is incapable of looking left or right, that he lacks a third dimension.

Kalms says: "He is single-minded and focuses on a problem to the point where he cannot take a lateral view on anything. He has a laser

mind, narrow but deep. He is bright, but he has a very unscientific approach to everything, and that's not meant to be a compliment. He gives very little thought to the greys of life." Others would say

that it is this ability to focus on the

manner in hand, without being side tracked by intellectual debate, which gives Sugar his distinctive, street-wise, business flair.

"He is extremely bright, but he is also very pragmatic," Sam Chisholm, chief executive of BSkyB, says. "He is naturally irrepressible, amazingly hands-on and if you offer him a deal, no matter what it is, he always wants to debate it. He loves to negotiate, he tells people all the time, he is very shrewd and he has great foresight. He saw satellite technology as a business long before most people. He is also unpretentious and anti-bureaucracy. If you ring the switchboard and ask for him, he will usually pick up the phone himself."

Sugar attributes this to the fact

that he has always been "very down

to earth." He has, he says, seen people who have let money go to their heads, "and they become different people, they try to force their way into upper circles and I'm just not like that. You never see my picture in *Tatler* magazine because I never go to those sorts of places."

Even official invitations from the government are carefully scrutinised. "If it's a do for 2,000 people then it can be binned, but if it's for ten, then I had better go. It's a case of whether my absence will be noticed."

In one breath Sugar talks about his childhood, about being a noisy rather than a shy child. — "Not a ruffian, but always plenty of talk" — and about being too poor to buy a bicycle, having to build his own from a secondhand frame. In the

next, he says of his millions: "It's a bit corny, but once you go past the first couple of million it doesn't make any difference. When we went public and someone plonked a cheque in my hand for £2 million, that felt good. I'd done it, I was set for life, but anything beyond that, another two or 20 or 40 or 70 doesn't matter."

Corny or not, Sugar is always brutally honest. He will give a straight answer to a straight question. Ask him about religion and he will say that he is an atheist but Jewish. "That's different, that's a culture, a way of life." Ask him about his mother and he will say that she is "very cold, very cynical and can be very miserable." He is, he says, exactly the same. "We are not a lovely, dovey family." He is aware of his faults but he will not try to correct them. He shrugs his shoulders in lame agreement when they are detailed.

That he hates journalists, detests being photographed, that he is irreverent, rude, and excessively aggressive. That he has an explosive temper and swears, that he hates wimps and needs strong people. At the same time, those who work most directly with him clearly adore him, get a buzz from working alongside him, say that he is

scrupulously fair, does not hold grudges, and describes his management style as that of a benevolent tyrant.

He often installs himself at a

vacant desk, on any of the floors in his Brentwood, Essex, headquarters,

for a morning or an afternoon. He is visible and hands on. The

only thing he disagrees with is his

supposed hatred of the City. He

admits that he dislikes talking to

stock market analysts — "They are very boring" — but says he has no

real complaints about the City as such. "Let's be very honest, I've made a lot of money out of the stock market, so how can I ever complain?"

The 1980s gave anyone the opportunity to succeed. The establishment was smashed. The old school tie went out the window'

tempted to vote Labour because of his working-class roots. He is equally direct about his own mistakes. He is in no sense a maverick or schemer. "If I could turn the clock back there are lots of things I wouldn't do. Like opening offices throughout the world and diving into product sectors which failed. I'm frustrated by what I know to be correct now."

He has, he says learnt a lot from his involvement with Tottenham Hotspur. "You get woken up a little bit, you see people spending a whole week resolving a matter worth £40,000. What's peanuts for Amstrad is big for them. It made me realise how big and blasé we had become here. It has brought my thinking back down to earth."

Despite the accusation that he was unimpeachable thinking is something Sugar often does. On aeroplanes he refuses to talk to fellow passengers — "The poor sod next to me is really in for a bad time" — because he needs peace to think. At home his wife says she can tell instantly from his expression whether to talk or to leave him well alone. "You can see his mind working, he is always thinking of new and different things."

Just as Sugar claims that he is

cold, when in reality he is not, he

simply finds it difficult to express himself, so he shies away from intellectual discussions, preferring to reach his own conclusions.

Kalms would no doubt argue that Sugar's atheism is demonstrative of an unsophisticated brain, unable to grasp the concept of religion. Sugar would argue the reverse, say that he has discussed it at length with the

chief rabbi and would conclude that he is, by nature, a scientist.

Scientist one minute, street fighter

the next. Sugar is a born survivor. Reports of Amstrad's collapse are, he says, premature. "£300 million in assets is hardly collapsed," he says.

"My wife keeps asking what I'm killing myself for, she says no one will thank me. Some people would throw

in the towel, say I've got more than

enough money to keep me and my

family for the rest of my life. The

papers would say I was just another

shooting star and then I failed. I

can't allow that to happen. I suppose

it's ego. I might only own 33 percent,

but this company is mine those are

my initials up there, and it's going to

be around forever."

WEEK ENDING Matthew Bond

So what did you do in the recession, Daddy?

and mum did?" His mother responds. "Well to be honest we met by chance. You see we both volunteered for jury service."

"What's that?" asks the puzzled boy.

"You'll probably get to it in a few history lessons' time. It was abolished in the middle Nineties, I think, something to do with it not being cost-effective. Just before they brought back the rock."

His father continues: "But we weren't any old jurors. Oh no, we specialised in the great fraud trials — Blue Arrow, Guinness, I and II, Bar-

rowd."

His parents swap glances and nod in silent accord. "Sit down son. We knew you'd want to know one day and you're probably old enough to be told now. But how much of it you'll be able to put in your essay I'm not sure, as it's still pretty hush-hush. You see your mother and I were on rather special services."

The son's eyes widen, as his father continues. "You see neither of us really fancied conventional recessionary duties. I thought about volunteering to queue in job centres all day, but then there were almost three million doing that already. Hardly what you call select. Then your mother, of course, got a long way down the line with the people who specialised in crying outside houses as the bailiffs went in. But she missed out after 75,000 people volunteered for the work in just one year."

His son interrupts. "So was everyone poor, Dad?"

"Oh no son, not everyone. Lawyers, for instance, made pots of money. And accountants fairly coined it; that is until they were forced to pay for all the mistakes they had made. And I remember that being the boss of Burton was always worth a bob or two. Never could understand quite why."

"But what was it that you

low... you name it, we sat on it."

Again the younger generation intersects. "But what is fraud and why were there so many trials?"

"Well now you're asking son. Your mother and I spent years trying to work that one out. But it all dates back to the late-Eighties and all the money there was splashing around. You must have done them in history by now."

"Actually, we haven't. Dad.

Our teacher said historians still can't decide whether the late-Eighties really hap-

pened, or whether they were

just a mass figment of the

imagination. But don't stop,

tell me more about your job."

"Well it was long and com-

Bond is refused bankruptcy appeal

FROM REUTER IN SYDNEY
ALAN Bond, the Australian entrepreneur, has failed to win leave to appeal against a Aus\$194 million (£82 million) bankruptcy notice, but his lawyer said he was not yet throwing in the towel.

Judge Gerard Brennan, in the High Court, refused Mr Bond special leave to appeal against an earlier ruling that he pay the money to a group of banks led by the Hong Kong Bank of Australia, a unit of HSBC Holdings. Mr Bond was ordered to pay costs.

The result of that is that there is no further avenue of appeal in relation to the judgment," Stephen Paterniti, Mr Bond's lawyer, said. But he said Mr Bond would apply to the Federal Court on Tuesday to have the bankruptcy notice, served for the second time in December, set aside as invalid.

"It [yesterday's] ruling takes away one corner of our argument," Mr Paterniti said.

The Aus\$194 million was a personal guarantee given by Mr Bond on a Aus\$40 million loan to Dallhold Investments, his private company, to fund the development of the Greenvale nickel mine in Queensland. Dallhold was put into liquidation last July with debts of more than Aus\$1 billion.

Last Monday, the Australian Securities Commission, Australia's corporate watchdog, said a two-year investigation into Bond Corporation had identified major breaches of the law that might lead to criminal prosecutions of several former office holders.

In September 1990, Mr Bond was forced to resign as chairman of his Bond Corporation empire, worth around Aus\$10 billion at its peak. His former flagship, which struggled for two years to avoid bankruptcy, is now undergoing a debt-for-equity swap scheme with its creditors. The corporation's current debt is around Aus\$2.4 billion.

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TEMPO

St Valentine's crush on WPP

MARTIN Sorrell, chief executive of WPP Group, is accustomed to a heavier post than the rest of us on St Valentine's Day, falling as it does on his birthday. Even he, however, did not expect the show of support from American investors that has pushed the WPP share price sharply higher.

On the face of it, WPP shares chose an odd time to take a hike, because the world's biggest advertising agency is in tough negotiations with its bankers about this year's budget and is only weeks off reporting what are likely to be fairly dire full-year figures.

WPP is playing down the significance of yesterday's presentation to the banking syndicate and does not believe it will have to ask for more cash. But the group's debts were £440 million last summer, and the continuing recession means Mr Sorrell is unlikely to be celebrating any reduction.

The group is not factoring any sale of its Scali McCabe Sloves agency into this year's budgets, al-

though such a sale has long been awaited. The Americans buying that started on Thursday evening was on a limited scale. The price shot ahead in London in equally thin buying, ending ahead 25p at 83p after going as high as 95p. The Americans may have been punting on WPP as a recovery stock, but the London market is less convinced the shares have much further to go, given that they bounced from a low of 31p just before Christmas.

WPP is a long way from being out of the woods, and the talks with the bankers could still prove difficult. Neil Blackley, at James Capel, expects the group to report pre-tax profits halved from £90 million to £46 million and does not believe dividend payments will be resumed until 1996. The market's scepticism is therefore reflected by a forward multiple of less than six.

The sudden upsurge is likely to tempt some hold-ers to take profits in due course. WPP remains for chancers only.

Headlam Group

GROWTH through acquisition, as cash-rich Reuters Holdings said this week, is a risky business. If one of Britain's largest and most successful companies is so averse to signing cheques, heaven knows how those at the other end of the corporate ladder must feel.

Headlam Group, a minority by any standards, has boldly proceeded with a acquisition that virtually doubles its size, but only after finding itself in an enviable position. In the first instance, it was able to place its executives in charge of the companies it wanted to buy. Headlam then decided the asking price was too high and coolly walked away.

Only a few weeks later, Graham Waldron, Headlam's chairman, had Hick-

son International agreeing to sell two companies at a price that suited him. Earlier this month, he returned for another three and Hickson agreed.

So confident is he and his fellow directors that the deal is a good one that they are subscribing for one-fifth of a £6.5 million share offer to fund the deal. New shares are being offered at 58p each and the market responded by marking existing shares up 5p to 65p. Other investors should follow Mr Waldron's example.

Headlam's broker expects profits to rise from an estimated £400,000 before tax last year to £1.2 million in the current year and £2.4 million in 1993. If this year's p/e of 15 falls below 9 in the next 12 months, the shares look a bargain.

THE City takes a gloomy view of prospects for BP over the next couple of years. That is reflected in the share price, which hit new lows.

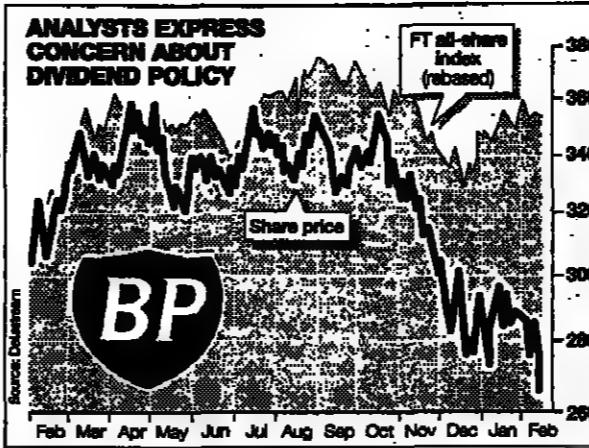
The shares suffered a 22p mark-down in early dealings yesterday. It followed a gloomy set of full-year figures on Thursday showing net income tumbling from £1.68 billion to £1.15 billion. Contrary to speculation, BP maintained its dividend but that did little to underpin the price. This ended 6p lower at 266p, after 60 million shares changed hands.

Analysts and fund managers express concern about the lack of dividend cover. County NatWest WoodMac says earnings, cash flows and the balance sheet are under pressure. Unless oil prices show signs of recovery soon, the share price will continue to sink.

Market-makers said yesterday's deterioration could have been worse had it not been for the appearance of "cheap" buyers on both sides of the Atlantic who were prepared to take a longer view of the company's prospects.

The problem of weak oil prices, with Opec still trying to reach an agreement on production levels in Geneva, is not exclusive to BP. Shell was also a weak market, falling 11p to 467p, ahead of figures next week. There were also losses for Enterprise, 7p to 412p, Lusaco, 10p to 218p, Hardy Oil, 5p to 130p, and Pintecar, 2p to 215p.

The bigger than expected fall in inflation brought much-needed cheer to the equity market and enabled many early price falls to be clawed back. The FT-SE 100 index was down more than 22 points in early trading on the back of overnight falls in both New York and Tokyo. It ended the session 8.7 lower at 2,513.9, but dealers say investor confidence remains low because of continued political and economic uncertainty. Turnover was boosted to 593 million shares by the



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heavy business in BP and other special situations.

Government securities suffered falls stretching to 5% at the longer end, reflecting similar losses recorded on the American bond market.

Heavy turnover was again recorded in NSM, a struggling open-cast coalmining and waste disposal group. The price hardened 4p to 34p. Twelve million shares were traded, making almost 17 million in two days. It looks as if market-makers are short of stock.

Hanson finished 2p firmer at 199.2p after the company had given its first briefing to analysts in years. On Thursday, Hanson revealed a downturn in first-quarter

profits. The presentation was made to try to improve the group's image in the City.

Lord Hanson bowed to pressure by announcing that David Clarke will eventually succeed Lord White as executive chairman of the group's American operation.

Thursday's figures were given a lukewarm reception by the City amid confusion over the group's decision to

begin paying dividends quarterly for tax reasons.

Anjo Wiggins Teape continued to lose ground, falling 16p to 23p as profit downgrades continued. Williams de Broe, a stockbroker, started the ball rolling on Monday and now the company's own broker, UBS Phillips & Drew, is reckoned to have cut its estimate.

Resters advanced 20p to 113.35 after giving a positive presentation to American brokers and fund managers in New York. The decline in the shares of Harland Simon continued. The price plunged another 60p to 193p, making a two-day fall of 29p, after an earlier profit warning by the company.

HP Bulmer celebrated the European Commission's decision not to increase cider duty with a rise of 11p to 274p. WPP reacted positively to overnight support on Wall Street with a rise of 25p to 285p. The debt-laden advertising group briefed its bankers yesterday. London dealers say the shares are seen as a potential recovery situation. Support for WPP rubbed off on Saatchi & Saatchi, 4p firmer at 144p.

Rosehaugh, the troubled property developer, firmed 4p to 82p after it was learned that Godfrey Bradman, deputy chairman, was resigning from the board.

His departure follows a breakdown in merger talks with Stanhope, the USM-quoted developer, which partners Rosehaugh in the City of London's Broadgate development. Stanhope advanced 4p to 35p.

Clarke Foods, the fast-growing ice-cream maker, began to run out of steam after a strong run this week. The price managed a rise of only 3p to 133p. The rise on the week is 41p. Last month, the group raised £6.5 million by way of a rights issue at 60p to help finance the acquisition of the Lyons Maid ice-cream business.

MICHAEL CLARK

New York—Blue chips partly recovered early losses by mid-morning but remained somewhat lower. The Dow Jones industrial average was down 10.51 at 3,236.14. Investors continued to shun equities because of weak bond prices. James Andrews, manager of equity trading at Janney

Montgomery Scott, said some trading accounts were thinning out positions ahead of a three-day weekend. Heavy sell programmes at the opening sent the Dow tumbling about 24 points before the fall was stemmed. Declining stocks outnumbered advances by two to one.

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WEEKEND MONEY

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15 1992

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Edited by Lindsay Cook

As the life industry yet again produces bumper sales figures, its regulator is gearing up its investigations and enforcement operation to deal with a growing number of complaints about the activities of some life assurance salesmen.

The sale of single-premium pension policies increased by 35 per cent last year. Much of it was transfers from company schemes.

It is not, therefore, surprising to learn from the Life Assurance and Unit Regulatory Organisation's enforcement bulletin that investors are increasingly questioning advice received to make such moves.

Too often, such moves are financially disastrous for the policyholder, but lucrative for the salesman.

One case that Lautro still has to deal with involves company representatives from the same branch systematically transferring a number of such investors out of a particularly attractive group scheme. Tied agents too often fail to make a sufficiently detailed,

realistic or objective analysis of the relative merits of transferring their prospective investors to a personal pension or leaving them in their occupational scheme, said Lautro.

The organisation is concerned that because of the limited understanding of pensions by the general public, the level of complaints received on this subject could understate the scale of the potential problem.

Life companies must check that every factfind accompanying such transfers from occupational pension schemes makes it clear that the sale is right for the client and not the salesman.

Lautro says that some of the sales staff have been inadequately trained, but agrees that others ignore what they know to be the correct advice.

In the meantime, Lautro is to remind life companies, in a future bulletin, that they should check



COMMENT

LINDSAY COOK
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

that only people who are likely to benefit are advised to transfer out of occupational pension schemes.

It is no good salesmen using any scare story about specific pension schemes in the news in an attempt to persuade individuals to leave perfectly sound schemes for a personal pension that will almost certainly provide a lower payout.

Lautro will also remind the life companies that they could find it both expensive and embarrassing if they do not carry out proper checks on their salesmen's activities. Companies may have to

pay up to restore the pension rights of investors who have lost out and could also find themselves publicly criticised as a disciplinary measure.

To date, Lautro has not used the publicity weapon in its efforts to protect investors but suggests that it might need to soon.

To make sure that Lautro knows just what is being suggested by salesmen, in sitting rooms and works canteens throughout the country, it is important that those people who refuse to move their pension money tell the regulator about the next week.

Maybe the 30 million Revenue

customers would have more confidence if they had a right to compensation when mistakes are made. What seems obvious from the Weekend Money mailbag is that tax officials still have a long way to go to meet the targets laid down this week.

Too many letters still go into a Revenue black hole, enabling the collectors to pursue bills which individuals feel they have explained away weeks or months earlier. Everyone makes mistakes. Few are as frightening or as costly as errors made by tax officials. Those who have accountants consult them. Others may have to take time off work to visit tax enquiry centres to find out how a demand was arrived at. Recompense ought to be more readily available.

Last summer, Weekend Money reported on the case of one reader who won a reduction in his tax bill after a catalogue of mistakes.

If compensation were promised to cover costs incurred when ordinary Revenue mistakes were made, customers might find they received fewer incorrect demands.

Indemnity insurers press for bigger part in running schemes

Haggling on detail holds up mortgage rescue plans

By LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

DIFFERENCES between insurance companies and mortgage lenders still have to be resolved before many of the mortgage rescue schemes announced before Christmas can go ahead. While the insurers support the schemes in principle, they say they do not want to pay for them.

Some insurance companies want to vet each borrower who is to be rescued to make sure that they would have ended up as a repossession case, and are even suggesting they should have the final say on who should get the help.

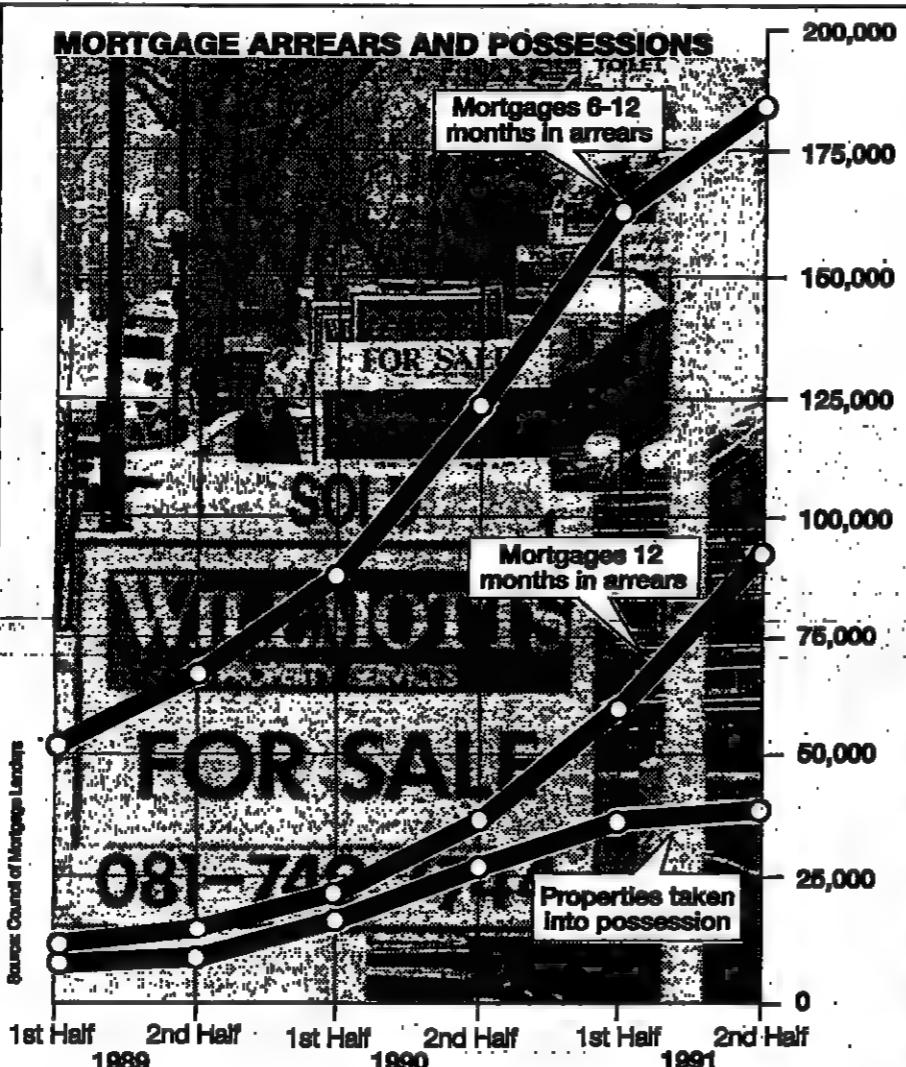
The discussions arise out of the mortgage indemnity policies that the lenders took out. The insurance companies are usually called upon to pay out when borrowers default on their loans and the property is then sold for less than the mortgage, arrears and sale costs. The policy pays the difference.

The policies, however, did not foresee the mortgage rescue schemes and legally need not pay out at all. Because of this, discussions with the insurance companies are delaying the announcement of detailed schemes.

The insurers are worried that they will have to pay out more in claims and more quickly than they would otherwise have done. Repossessions take on average 15 months and then there is a delay while the property is sold before the claim is made on the policy. Under the rescue schemes lenders will make claims earlier and they may be made for people who would not have had their homes repossessed even without the scheme.

Abbey National, which has committed £60 million to a rescue scheme, said: "We are still in a series of talks as to how the insurers can help with our mortgage rescue schemes." The Abbey used four insurance companies, and plans through its own housing association to buy properties which will then be rented to the original homebuyers.

Frank Bartlett, head of lending services at the Woolwich building society, said it could not announce details of its scheme until its "candid



and open" discussions with the insurance companies were completed. He added that insurance companies would pay out less with the rescue schemes because there would be no distress sale of the property and the arrears would not mount up over a long period as they did with repossession.

He said it was in the interests of both insurance companies and lenders for the schemes to work.

At the Halifax, David Gilchrist, general manager, said the insurance companies were very supportive of its pilot mortgages into rents schemes. These would help a relatively small number of people. He added that the claims on indemnity policies for these homes would be

lower than for repossession because there was a market valuation instead of a forced sale.

Rod Young, director of personal insurances at Legal & General, lead indemnity insurer for the Woolwich, said: "At the time that agreement in principle was reached with the government a lot of detail still had to be sorted out. There is still a lot of detail to be agreed."

He continued that lenders had negotiated with housing associations first of all about the interest rates to be charged, and now were talking to the insurance companies.

In cases where a lender plans to take a share in the rescued property the companies are negotiating for a

share of the potential profits when the property is sold.

Currently, a typical claim is costing an insurance company £13,000 to £15,000. That suggests that last year's 75,000 repossession will eventually cost the insurance industry about £1 billion.

Next month insurance companies will begin to report their results for last year and these will feature heavy write-offs for mortgage indemnity business. The total cost of the slump in the housing market could be £3 billion to £4 billion.

As a result of these claims the insurance premiums have risen by 50 per cent, and some large indemnity insurers are considering withdrawing from the mortgage indemnity market.

Lenders to reward the faithful

LYALITY is beginning to pay off for homebuyers. This week, Abbey National has written to all its 1.2 million borrowers offering them a mortgage at a fixed rate until May 1999 that will not be offered to the general public through branches (Lindsay Cook writes).

Those people who opt for the rate fixed at 10.9 per cent, an annual percentage rate of 11.7 per cent, will not have to pay the Abbey's £275 administration fee for the remortgage.

About 85 per cent of the society's existing borrowers have loans under £60,000 and from next month will be paying 10.9 per cent on their loans.

The decision whether to opt for the certainty of the fixed rate or to stay with a variable rate that could come down further about the time of the Budget will be a difficult one for most borrowers.

The bank will be making other offers in the future to its existing borrowers.

The loyalty mortgages are being offered after a survey was conducted for the former building society. Existing homebuyers were asked if they were going to change lender the next time they moved. Among those who said that they would, cheaper mortgage rates and better terms were the main reason, al-

though 11 per cent said they were dissatisfied with the first lender.

Many feel that new borrowers receive the best deals. The fixed-rate offer and subsequent ones are intended to dispel that feeling. It is cheaper for banks and building societies to keep existing customers than to attract new ones.

The Adams residential property index over the past two years shows that many of the top ten lenders get less than half their existing borrowers back when they move house. In the last quarter of 1991, the Leeds got 36.1 per cent of borrowers back, the Alliance & Leicester 40.6 per cent, the Woolwich 48.1 per cent, Nationwide 49.1 per cent, Abbey 53.3 per cent and the Halifax 56.6 per cent.

Bristol & West Building Society was one of the first to make a special offer to existing borrowers when it launched its Cascade mortgage in November 1990. This gave borrowers the chance to guarantee that their loan rate would fall by 3 per cent over the next year from the standard rate prevailing at the time of 14.5 per cent. The 7,000 who took the offer had their rates cut to 13.5 per cent in February, 12.5 per cent in May and to 12 per cent in August. The final fall was to 11.5 per cent in November. Now that three months has expired the borrowers

LENDERS confidently expect next month's Budget to include the announcement of another cut in interest rates, and are also hoping for more generous tax relief on mortgage interest, particularly for first-time buyers.

The Abbey National, the second largest lender, is confident enough that there will be good news in the Budget to write to its 1.2 million borrowers telling them that no new mortgage payments will be set until after the Budget on March 10.

A letter being sent to customers this week tells existing borrowers that their rate will change on March 1 following the bank's half-point cut last month. But the letter goes on: "We will send you new payment details and standing order amendment form in March after the Budget has been announced. In this way we can ensure that your new payment takes into account any changes the Chancellor may make in the Budget which may affect your monthly payments."

The bank took everyone by surprise last month when it cut mortgage rates without the normal trigger of a base rate cut.

The Abbey said: "Initiatives to get the market moving have already started, with the suspension of stamp duty and our lead in cutting interest rates. There are definite signs that the government wants to

get the market moving and the Budget would seem the ideal opportunity for changes."

The Halifax building society, the largest lender, sets its payments for its annual review customers on February 1. Of the society's 1.7 million borrowers, 1.3 million are on annual review. The first payment at the new rate will start on April 1 and will be calculated using the new rate of 10.95 per cent set in January. Any cut in rates in the Budget will not be felt until next year's review unless rates move by more than 3 per cent during the course of the year.

The bank took everyone by surprise last month when it cut mortgage rates without the normal trigger of a base rate cut.

The Abbey said: "Initiatives to get the market moving have already started, with the suspension of stamp duty and our lead in cutting interest rates. There are definite signs that the government wants to

prove tax relief on mortgage payments, particularly for first-time buyers," Mr Gilchrist said. The cost to the government of financing this relief has fallen since last year, when higher rate tax relief on mortgage payments was abolished.

Lower interest rates and lower house prices have also played their part in bringing down the costs. However, mortgage interest relief has become steadily less significant for borrowers.

Mr Gilchrist said: "In the Seventies, Miras [mortgage interest relief at source] reduced monthly payments by about 40 per cent. But now the proportion is only 15 per cent. The cost of raising Miras to £60,000 for first-time buyers would be about a third of the cost of raising it to £40,000 for everyone."

At the moment borrowers can claim tax relief on payments for the first £30,000 of a mortgage.

The Halifax calculates that every £10,000 increase in

mortgage tax relief is equal to knocking half a percentage point off the mortgage rate. Any changes to mortgage interest tax relief in the Budget would have an effect on mortgage payments, but the Halifax would alter payments on mortgages reviewed annually only if the changes were drastic.

A cut in interest rates in the Budget would continue a trend which started in October 1990, when the rate fell from a crippling 15.4 per cent to 14.5 per cent. Another half-point cut would mean a standard variable rate of 10.49 per cent. A borrower with a £40,000 endowment mortgage from the Abbey National would see his or her monthly payment fall by £13.54 from £297.65 to £284.10.

When interest rates were at their highest, a £40,000 endowment loan would have cost £417.08 a month - £120 more than the new mortgage rate.

Rates fell to their lowest point for ten years in June 1988 when the standard rate was 9.8 per cent. They did not stay in single figures for long. By September of the same year, rates had started climbing, and continued to do so until the beginning of 1990. There is no guarantee that the same will not happen again.

SARA MCCONNELL

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Exeter takes the plunge with unit fund in warrants

THE first unit trust to take advantage of new regulations and invest in warrants will be launched next week by Exeter Trust.

Changes to the rules on unit trust investment last summer allowed fund managers to use futures, options and warrants as part of their investment strategy. So far most managers have considered these too risky for private investors. Only Legal & General has so far launched a fund using futures.

Exeter Trust expects to hold at least 60 per cent of its Warrant Fund in warrants, but this could be as much as 80 per cent. Buying a warrant entitles the holder to purchase shares at a fixed price on a specific date or during a specific period, although there is no obligation to buy them. Warrants are traded like shares. Their attraction is that they cost less than the shares themselves, so if the market is going up fund managers can use warrants to acquire more shares cheaply and sell them at a profit.

Unlike geared futures and option funds (GROFs), warrant funds will not borrow money to buy warrants so the fund should not have a negative value. The fund will also invest between 20 and 40 per cent of its funds in lower risk zero dividend preference shares of investment trust companies.

These rise by a fixed compound rate every year and have a final predetermined repayment value on the winding-up date of the investment trust. They do not pay an income but will generate one for investors holding income-generating shares within the investment trust. The unit trust will be available next week. The minimum investment is £1,000 and there will be a 2 per cent discount for those investing before March 20.

Christopher Whittinglow, Exeter Fund Managers' investment manager, said: "It isn't impossible that people could lose all the proportion of the fund invested in warrants.

SARA McCONNELL

The price movements of ordinary shares are magnified in the price of warrants, which means they fall further than ordinary shares. This could mean that investors lose all that part of the fund invested in warrants if they cash in at the wrong time.

The unit trust will be available next week. The minimum investment is £1,000 and there will be a 2 per cent discount for those investing before March 20.

But investors in ethical funds need to be even more vigilant than those in other funds. The criteria set out by

ANOTHER ethical fund was launched this week, complete with literature promising to adhere to strict investment criteria. Like other companies in the sector, Skandia Life says its Ethical Selection Fund will steer clear of companies profiting from sales of alcohol, arms or pornography, those which operate in South Africa or other countries with oppressive regimes, or which damage the environment. It will invest in companies which make a positive contribution to environmental protection, pollution control or which operate equal opportunities policies.

Lee Coates, an independent financial adviser whose firm, the Ethical Investors Group, specialises in ethical investment,

said: "A lot of companies are funding the criteria and the problem is that with the criteria so vague it allows companies to find loopholes."

Pharmaceutical companies which experimented on animals while developing drugs and cosmetics were one area of concern. The fund managers of NM Financial Management's Conscience Fund argue that while they will not invest in companies which use animals to develop cosmetics, the importance of testing drugs which could save human lives overrides ethical concerns.

Some funds also continue to invest in big conglomerates which earn part of their profit from South Africa. The Amity fund run by the Ecclesiastical Group will not invest in companies with "material involvement in South Africa". Mr Coates said: "This is very vague. What does material involvement mean?"

Ecclesiastical said it used several measures, including the number of employees and a company's level of turnover and profit in South Africa.

Sue Round, who manages the fund, said: "Everyone has a slightly different view of what is ethical."

The fund will be managed by Jupiter Tyndall Merlin, specialists in ethical investment, and stock selection will be overseen by Mr Coates.

A maximum of 65 per cent of the fund will be invested directly in stocks which meet the ethical criteria. A minimum of 25 per cent will go into ethical unit trusts. The remaining money will be held on deposit, at an ethically acceptable institution.

Peter Webster, director of EIRIS, the ethical investment research service, said: "There are clearly lots of different ideas of what's ethical and what isn't, but it's very unsafe to think I'm ethical and this

is an ethical fund". Investors need to ask whether companies are putting much effort into research. Investors are most concerned about avoiding investment in companies which harm the environment and those which trade in arms.

Mr Webster said that concerned investors should write to the fund manager. "A lot of funds listen, and people should write in. It will make a difference."

Meeting like the one held twice yearly by NFM for its Conscience Fund should not be rejected as a gimmick, Mr Webster said.

Investors in unit trusts who find themselves disagreeing with the aims of the fund can cash in their units. Those taking out a long-term contract like a pension or life assurance policy linked to an ethical fund could find it costly to move.

Skandia is aiming to give investors access to a range of funds managed by different companies, partly so that people are not trapped in one fund with their money going to companies they disapprove of. This is particularly important, as the Skandia fund is only offered linked to a life assurance or pension contract, both of which are long-term commitments and expensive to get out of.

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PAULA YOUNG

BRIEFINGS

LLOYDS Bank is sending all its 5.3 million customers a booklet explaining what the new banking code of practice will mean for them. The code comes into effect on March 16 and sets minimum standards for banks in dealing with their customers. Lloyds booklet promises to give customers written terms and conditions of services, and to publish a tariff of basic charges. The bank will not respond to other banks' requests for financial references or disclose information outside the Lloyds group. Customers will only have to pay the first £50 of any unauthorised cash withdrawal unless they have been negligent.

THE Bradford & Bingley building society has also updated its customer charter, which sets out its duties to its customers. The booklet covers savings accounts, life assurance, pensions, loans and equity investment.

TWO fixed rate mortgages are being offered by the Alliance & Leicester and the Britannia building societies. The Alliance & Leicester's loan is fixed at 9.99 per cent (an annual percentage rate of 11.5 per cent) for two years. The loan is offered on endowment or pension-linked loans and there will be an arrangement fee of 0.5 per cent. The Britannia has fixed a rate of 10.3 per cent (APR 11.5 per cent) until December 31 1993. First-time buyers will get a further 1 per cent discount, fixing their rate at 9.3 per cent.

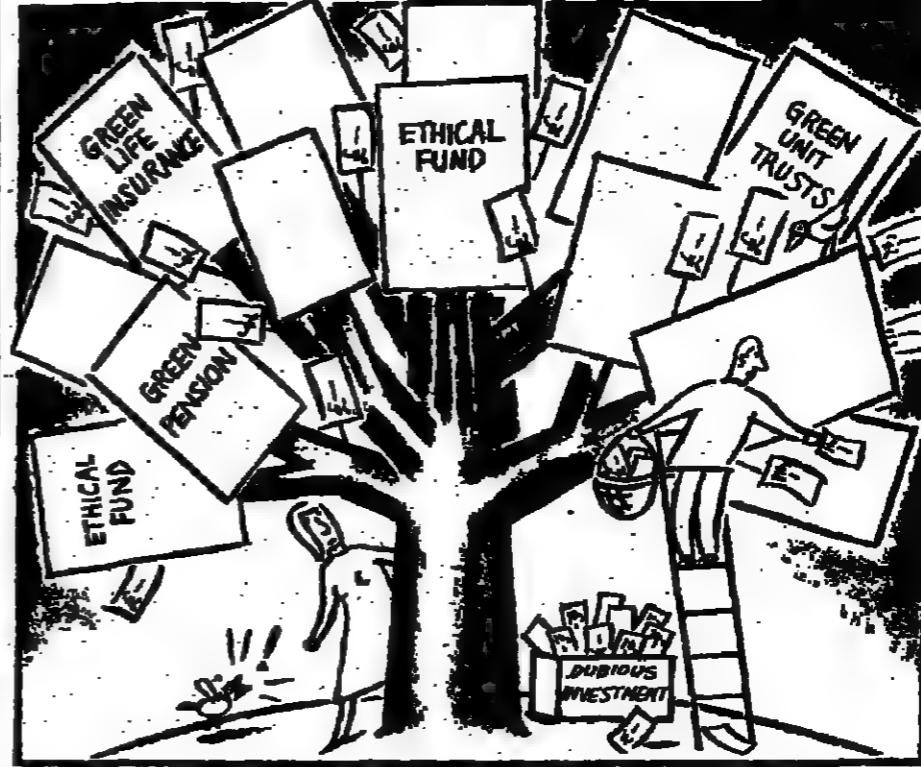
SAVERS who want to give money to charity do so by opening a High 30 Donations account with the Bristol & West building society. Interest paid on the account is half a point lower than on the ordinary High 30 account but this difference will be paid annually to one of four charities. These are the Imperial Cancer Research fund, Shelter, the Home Farm Trust and the Institute of Child Health. Bristol & West will also pay a lump sum to each charity. Savers have to give 30 days' notice for penalty-free access but have one free withdrawal of up to £1,000 every 12 months.

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Ethical investment demands vigilance

By SARA McCONNELL

ANOTHER ethical fund was launched this week, complete with literature promising to adhere to strict investment criteria. Like other companies in the sector, Skandia Life says its Ethical Selection Fund will steer clear of companies profiting from sales of alcohol, arms or pornography, those which operate in South Africa or other countries with oppressive regimes, or which damage the environment. It will invest in companies which make a positive contribution to environmental protection, pollution control or which operate equal opportunities policies.

But investors in ethical funds need to be even more vigilant than those in other funds. The criteria set out by

some fund managers are vague enough to allow them to invest in companies whose activities some investors would find distasteful.

Lee Coates, an independent financial adviser whose firm, the Ethical Investors Group, specialises in ethical investment,

said: "A lot of companies are funding the criteria and the problem is that with the criteria so vague it allows companies to find loopholes."

Pharmaceutical companies which experimented on animals while developing drugs and cosmetics were one area of concern. The fund managers of NM Financial Management's Conscience Fund argue that while they will not invest in companies which use animals to develop cosmetics, the importance of testing drugs which could save human lives overrides ethical concerns.

Some funds also continue to invest in big conglomerates which earn part of their profit from South Africa. The Amity fund run by the Ecclesiastical Group will not invest in companies with "material involvement in South Africa". Mr Coates said: "This is very vague. What does material involvement mean?"

Ecclesiastical said it used several measures, including the number of employees and a company's level of turnover and profit in South Africa.

Sue Round, who manages the fund, said: "Everyone has a slightly different view of what is ethical."

The fund will be managed by Jupiter Tyndall Merlin, specialists in ethical investment, and stock selection will be overseen by Mr Coates.

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PRIVATE client stockbrokers and building societies used to be as like as chalk and cheese. But now the Abbey National, a former building society, has announced plans to launch a private client stockbroker at the end of 1992, and no one has battened an eyelid.

Abbey National will try to copy the success of the execution-only brokers like the banks and Birmingham-based Sharelink. They simply take an order by telephone or post, and execute it for a low price.

This is one of many challenges to the dwindling band of traditional private client stockbrokers who offer advice and even portfolio management although it does not

ment, but at a higher price. In many cases it is forcing them upmarket, and two distinct types of private client broker have emerged.

David Jones, Sharelink's chief executive, anticipated just such a development when he set up the business in 1987. In five years his workforce has grown to 250 full-time employees, and has expanded to 750 when times are busy.

He has been copied by the likes of Fidelity Share Services, which again offers a low-cost dealing service. Fidelity differs in that it administers clients' portfolios, and will relay stock market information although it does not

offer advice. Meanwhile, the widespread casualties among the traditional private client stockbrokers are well-known. They have been assailed by rising costs, falling volumes of business, the crash of 1987, and a series of investment scandals.

Exact figures are hard to come by, but many big London stockbrokers sold their private client lists to provincial firms in the late Eighties, after Big Bang. Many of the pure private client firms shut or merged with others.

Neither of the two chains of private client stockbrokers formed by mergers has been a conspicuous success. The National Investment Group was sold to Capel Cure Myers which is now reported to be up for sale itself. Allied Provincial, while profitable, has faced extensive redundancies, and is said to be a hotbed of discontent.

As if all that were not enough, private client stockbrokers now face the cost of converting their back-offices to the Taurus paperless settlement system by April 1993. They will also have to prepare for a new rolling settlement system timetable by early 1994.

Faced with a fight for survival, the bowler-hatted private client broker is beginning to evolve. Many of the most upmarket London brokers, like Cazenove, started charging fees rather than commission some time ago, and their less elitist provincial cousins are following suit.

BWD Rensburg, the northern stockbroking firm, started giving its clients a choice between fees and commission last April. Clients who come to Rensburg for

Ringing the changes: Brokers like James Capel are having to update their services

advice or a discretionary portfolio management service now have the option of paying a sliding scale of fees and a flat £25 dealing charge, or the old commission.

Under the Premier Plus Service portfolios are valued, a nominees service is provided, and tax vouchers are prepared. Rensburg expects 5 per cent of its stockbroking income from fees this year and the rest from commission.

Allied Provincial is considering a similar path. A spokesman said: "I think any sort of private client broker is talking about changing in a different way."

Many private client brokers are also developing to provide a complete range of financial services, from drawing up a will, to life insurance, to portfolio management.

Ian Wade is chairman of the private client division at Albert E. Sharp, the Birmingham firm, and also a director of Sharelink, and so is in a position to watch developments on both sides of the private client business.

He said: "I think a split is occurring in the industry. The old stockbroker was half way between execution-only and advisory. People asked about Marks & Spencer and bought some. That type of business was always vulnera-

ble to execution-only type of businesses.

"There have always been brokers like us who have looked to provide a full portfolio service. We are at the other end of the split. The hole is appearing in the middle, which is the rather low value-added execution-only type business."

Quite apart from reshaping their businesses the traditional private client brokers are

also preparing to cast off their fusty exclusive image and market themselves. Their trade association, the Association of Private Client Investors, Managers and Stockbrokers, is preparing a marketing campaign.

Michael Baker, chief executive, will emphasise that stockbrokers have to pass an examination while other financial advisers do not. He will also emphasise the openness of stockbroking charges compared with the life insurance industry. He says that while today's 12 million shareholders will decrease in number, those that are left will have even larger portfolios as they are made richer by inheritance. He hopes his members will benefit.

Mr Jones of Sharelink, whose previous vision has made him a rich man, has another prediction. He forecasts that private client stockbroking will polarise into four areas. On the execution-only side there will be businesses like Sharelink and companies like Abbey National which take their share registers and dealing in-house. And on the traditional side there will be advisory stockbrokers, which charge for advice but contract out the dealing, accompanied by a small band of increasingly upmarket firms which do everything.

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2080/2081/2082

2090/2091/2092

2100/2101/2102

2110/2111/2112

2120/2121/2122

2130/2131/2132

2140/2141/2142

2150/2151/2152

2160/2161/2162

2170/2171/2172

2180/2181/2182

2190/2191/2192

2200/2201/2202

2210/2211/2212

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Bankruptcy the wrong route for many insolvents

By Liz DOLAN

MANY of the 22,632 people who were declared bankrupt last year could have avoided the whole humiliating experience if they had been properly advised.

A reader from rural Wales was recently saved from bankruptcy thanks to the chance discovery of an insolvency consultant. Until then he had believed that bankruptcy was inevitable after the collapse of his one-man business.

An insolvency consultant puts firms and individuals in touch with insolvency practitioners, who may be able to suggest an alternative to bankruptcy. In this case, the practitioner advised opting for an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA), a scheme set up under the 1986 Insolvency Act. It is a legally binding agreement between debtor and creditors, which can be a better solution for both sides, although it is appropriate only where the debtor has a reasonable amount of realisable assets. Under the arrangement, the debtor offers the creditors the best deal he or she can muster. Steve King, of the Manchester consultant,

King & Co, said: "You have to offer something sensible. Fifty per cent of the total owed is average. Thirty per cent would probably be too low."

The offer has to be approved by creditors representing three-quarters of the total value of the debt. Correctly advised, most people can arrive at a mutually beneficial package. Mr King said that nine in ten of the offers made by his clients were accepted, largely because IVAs benefits were normally so much better for creditors than if the debtor was declared bankrupt. He calculates that creditors involved in bankruptcy cases get back, on average, only 20 per cent of what they are owed, whereas those with personal voluntary arrangements should regain around 50 per cent.

In the reader's case, the creditors were particularly lucky, because the practitioner discovered he had an annuity that could be cashed in and used to repay all his debts. He said: "I was stunned. I was under the impression I couldn't touch it, but apparently you can in these circumstances."

Once an agreement has been reached, it is ratified in court. Provided the debtor keeps to the terms of the IVA, he is then permanently pro-

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House buyers put at risk

By OWEN DOWER

ANY couple thinking of transferring their home from one spouse's name into joint names should think again. It could cost them hundreds or even thousands of pounds when they come to sell.

A little-noticed section of the Insolvency Act 1986 could require them to take out a special insurance policy just to sell their house. In a buyer's market like today's, it could even deter potential purchasers.

Mortgage lenders are insisting that sellers insure against the former owner's bankruptcy before sales can go ahead.

The Act was designed to prevent businesses threatened with bankruptcy from evading creditors by putting the family home into the wife's name. It gives the court sweeping powers to set aside any gift or any sale for less than the full market value within the previous five years if the person transferring the property later becomes bankrupt.

Children who get lifetime gifts of property from their parents may also be caught by the Act. So may former wives who win the family home in a divorce settlement.

The court can exercise its powers even if the property is sold after the transfer but before the bankruptcy to an



Castles defender: Patrick Stevens raised the issue

of innocent buyer who paid the full market price. So anyone buying within five years of a gift or transfer at less than market value could risk having their home snatched back to pay a bankrupt former owner's creditors.

Patrick Stevens, a Chwyd solicitor who has raised the issue with the Law Society, said: "No Englishman's home can be his castle if the castle can be snatched back at any time within five years. Imagine the uproar if goods on HP could be taken back if the HP company went bust."

Problems do not arise only on sales. Somebody given property or sold it for less than full value may also have to take out insurance against

1 per cent of the value of the nephew's former share when she arranged to sell the house for £80,000. But the insurers insisted on building in five years' inflation, which raised the premium to £395, or 1.5 per cent.

The insurers, Royal Insurance, required an accountant's report on the nephew's financial circumstances, which added to the cost.

The Law Society is pressing for a change in the law to protect buyers in good faith from the risk of losing their home, although it believes there is little danger that the courts would oust an innocent owner. The government agrees that the risk is minimal and insists that any amendment would have to be introduced by a private member's bill.

A spokesman for the Nationwide Building Society also doubted that the courts would exercise the power, but said the society normally insisted on insurance and admitted that the premiums were "quite high".

Insurers and brokers could not think of a single case where a payout had been made under such a policy. It seems that thousands of homeowners are being effectively compelled to take out expensive insurance against an eventuality that experts agree will probably never materialise.

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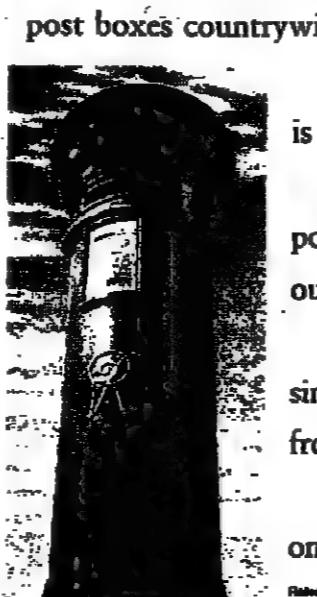
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Money talks and walks

From Mr Deryck Roberts

Sir, The article by Lindsay Cook (Weekend Money, February 1) was interesting in pointing out the activities of the Halifax Building Society in its timing of the announcement of new charges on savings accounts of less than £50. Quite rightly, the article states that, by next year, the Halifax will not need to divulge how many people have closed their accounts because of this.

May I add a salutary thought?

This ill-thought imposition will have a knock-on effect that, hopefully, will reflect on their trading account for next year.

I, like many other parents, have been encouraging my children to save — no matter how little — with sound, caring organisations, should the day come when one needs to be talking about mortgages and extensions etc.

My two children have now closed their accounts with the Halifax — no big deal as far as the Halifax is concerned — but the knock-on effect is that my wife has also closed her account (well above the £50 limit), in protest. Whilst she was waiting in a long queue, it became obvious that others were of like mind.

Adding to the knock-on effect, my 25-year endowment policy (ironically covering my 23-year mortgage with the Halifax) matures in two years' time.

No prizes for guessing who will not be handling the investment of this money.

I do not need to attend an AGM to make my voice heard — money talks.

Yours faithfully,
DERYCK ROBERTS,
260 Maldon Road,
Colchester, Essex.

Wayward interest

From Mr Gordon Dennis

Sir, I can't compete with Dr Birns' report (February 8) of the Nationwide Building Society taking seven days to clear a cheque but I have a small, poignant tale.

On January 31, a regular monthly payment left my Oxford bank to travel 14 miles to my wife's building society; it was credited on February 4. During those five days, neither of us received any interest on our money. Where was it? And who was using it?

Yours faithfully,
GORDON DENNIS,
Ranmoor, The Green,
Sandlake, Oxfordshire.

An investment**vehicle****that's low on****running costs,****high on****performance.****TOUCHE REMNANT****Lease anomalies**

From Ms Joan South

Sir, Mr Henson was quite correct in his letter (Weekend Money, February 8) that Lindsay Cook's article on the subject of leasehold enfranchisement (February 1) was a timely reminder of the anomalies which have prevented a large number of house leaseholders and particularly those in central London from enfranchising the ground rent charged which they fix at marginally over the two-third limit without affecting their security to secure the highest possible premium on the grant of a long lease. This is the particular situation to which Lindsay Cook is referring in the final sentence of her article, a situation fully borne out in such estates as the Benyon in Hackney, where rateable values are modest (often no more than £300) but where post-1967 act leases have consistently set ground rents at unenfranchisable levels.

It is therefore vitally important that the new legislation the government has in mind to amend the 1967 act must remove both value related conditions, particularly the notorious two-thirds rule, which the government must abolish if they do seriously intend to end once and for all the anomalies which the 1967 act created. The imposition of both rateable value and ground rent qualifications was from the outset always arbitrary. No explanation was given for the inclusion of a rateable value limit in the white paper which preceded the 1967 legislation, nor was there any mention

Tax time warp

From C.A. Keane

Sir, I can't compete with Dr Birns' report (February 8) of the Nationwide Building Society taking seven days to clear a cheque but I have a small, poignant tale.

Although I reach the age of 65 on April 3, (that is to say, within the 1991-2 financial year) I do not qualify for the increased age allowance until April 6 1993.

It seems rather incongruous that I have to wait 12 months for the increased allowance when anyone getting married during a financial year can claim an annual proportion for the married man's allowance.

Yours faithfully,
C.A. KENNEDY,
163 Hillside Road,
Beeston, Nottinghamshire.

Actuarial skill

From Mr Michael Field

Sir, With reference to Mr Alan Hickman's letter (Weekend Money, February 8) your readers may be interested to learn that a profession exists whose members have precisely the skill required to advise an early leaver from an occupational pension scheme whether or not to accept a transfer value, namely the actuarial profession. Most actuarial pensions consultant-

cies will have both the administrative and computer systems in place to be able to advise in this situation, and the client can be assured of impartial advice as the actuary will charge for the work purely on a "time-spent" basis, regardless of the recommendations ultimately given.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL FIELD
(Consulting Actuary),
8 St Stephen Street,
Manchester.

INTEREST RATES		GONDWANAS	
Nominal rate	Compounded at last rates	1 month	7 day
2.63	2.68	2.12	none
7.98	7.98	5.68	25.00-50.00
7.31	7.31	5.68	25.00-50.00
6.52	6.52	5.25	25.00-50.00
6.56	6.56	5.25	no max
6.70	6.70	5.00	Local Branch
6.95	6.95	5.25	10.00-20.00
6.95	6.95	5.25	10.00-20.00
6.95	6.95	5.25	10.00-20.00
6.95	6.95	5.25	10.00-20.00

ORDINARY DEP A/C		BANKS	
Typical	2.63	2.68	2.12
Bardsey	7.98	7.98	5.68
Bray	7.31	7.31	5.68
Brighton	6.52	6.52	5.25
Bristol	6.56	6.56	5.25
Cardiff	6.70	6.70	5.00
Chester	6.95	6.95	5.25
Glasgow	6.95	6.95	5.25
London	6.95	6.95	5.25
Nottingham	6.95	6.95	5.25
Sheffield	6.95	6.95	5.25
Southampton	6.95	6.95	5.25
Swindon	6.95	6.95	5.25
Wales	6.95	6.95	5.25

HIGH INTEREST CHEQUE ACCOUNTS	
Bank of Scotland MNG	6.48
Barclays	6.78
Co-operative	6.78
HSBC	6.51
Lloyds	6.51
Midland	6.56
NatWest	6.70
Northumbrian	6.70
Scotbank	6.51
Special Reserve	6.49
Royal Bank of Scotland	6.51
TSB	6.51
ICICI	6.51
HICL	6.49

BUILDING SOCIETIES	
Ordinary Share	5.85
A/c	5.85
Build	

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15 1992

Portfolio

PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your share price movements on this page only. Add these prices to your running total for the week and check this against the weekly average figure on this page. If it makes a loss, you can sell it at a profit or a share of the total weekly price money stated. If you win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. You can also have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No Company Group Gain or loss

No	Company	Group	Gain or loss
1	Magners (I)	Building/Rds	
2	Lionhead	Industrial	
3	Impeach	Industrial	
4	BAA	Transport	
5	WPP Ind	Building/Rds	
6	Reed Int	Newspaper/Pub	
7	Crest Nicholson	Building/Rds	
8	Taylor Woodrow	Building/Rds	
9	Tomline	Industrial	
10	Cadbury-Schweppes	Foods	
11	Sohn Water	Water	
12	Stampsby Prts	Property	
13	Hoodman	Shoe/Lth	
14	Terence	Building/Rds	
15	McGregor W	Breweries	
16	Clarke Foods	Foods	
17	Mark Spencer	Drapery/Sts	
18	Swing Seats	Newspaper/Sts	
19	Anglian Water	Water	
20	Creighton Nt	Industrial	
21	De La Rue	Industrial	
22	Bellway	Building/Rds	
23	Anglia TV	Leisure	
24	Whitbread 'A'	Breweries	
25	Concorde	Industrial	
26	SEET	Textiles	
27	Northumbrian Pw	Foods	
28	Dowty	Motors/Air	
29	Devonshire (AJ)	Breweries	
30	Jardine Math	Industrial	
31	Liberty	Drapery/Sts	
32	Powerscan	Industrial	
33	Redland	Building/Rds	
34	Owners Abroad	Leisure	
35	Radio Clyde	Leisure	
36	Whalegate	Leisure	
37	ERF	Motors/Air	
38	Nat Aust Bk	Banks/Disc	
39	BSG	Industrial	
40	Yorkdale	Textiles	
41	Capgemini	Property	
42	Unit Beaufit	Foods	
43	Cormac	Industrial	
44	Woodside	Oil/Gas	
45	Times Newspapers Ltd. Total		

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend

Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £4,000 in today's newspaper:

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT Sun

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE													
Bid	Offer	Wkly	Ytd	Bid	Offer	Wkly	Ytd	Bid	Offer	Wkly	Ytd		
ABERN UNIT TRUST MANAGERS				Income Growth	301.80	311.10	2.10	543	General	391.10	417.20	-1.10	2.68
K114444				Empl Corp	343.80	403.10	2.00	543	Global Tech	94.44	101.80	+ 0.00	1.78
BH45 BAL 0545 717373				Master Portfolio	836.80	873.01	+ 1.00	543	Global Trust	100.50	113.44	+ 0.10	2.01
Managers	95.16	102.25	- 0.00	Special Size	69.59	74.04	- 0.00	543	Global Trust	63.96	67.49	- 0.00	0.63
Diversified Gf	85.15	92.00	- 0.00	High Yield	975.70	102.45	- 0.00	543	Global Trust	65.00	67.49	- 0.00	0.63
Global Gf	46.73	49.75	- 0.20	0.00	1074.92	1113.00	- 0.00	543	Global Trust	67.00	72.77	- 0.00	1.14
Global Fund	10.00	10.00	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	68.25	73.73	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	74.30	78.50	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	75.00	79.50	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	76.25	80.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	77.00	81.25	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	78.00	82.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	79.00	83.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	80.00	84.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	81.00	85.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	82.00	86.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	83.00	87.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	84.00	88.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	85.00	89.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	86.00	90.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	87.00	91.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	88.00	92.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	89.00	93.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	90.00	94.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	91.00	95.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	92.00	96.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	93.00	97.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	94.00	98.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	95.00	99.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	96.00	100.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	97.00	101.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	98.00	102.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	99.00	103.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	100.00	104.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	101.00	105.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	102.00	106.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	103.00	107.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	104.00	108.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	105.00	109.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	106.00	110.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	107.00	111.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	108.00	112.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	109.00	113.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	110.00	114.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	111.00	115.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	112.00	116.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	113.00	117.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	114.00	118.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	115.00	119.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	116.00	120.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	117.00	121.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	118.00	122.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	119.00	123.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	120.00	124.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	121.00	125.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	122.00	126.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	123.00	127.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	124.00	128.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	125.00	129.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	126.00	130.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	127.00	131.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	128.00	132.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	129.00	133.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Gilt Fund	12.50	12.50	- 0.00	0.00	543	Global Trust	130.00	134.00	- 0.00	0.63			
High Inv Equity	125.20	131.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	131.00	135.00	- 0.00	0.63			
Global Fund	117.40	120.00	- 0.20	0.00	543	Global Trust	132.00	136.00	-				

Austrian favourite for the women's downhill believes that controversial course is too dangerous

Kronberger sees no easy path to gold

FROM DAVID POWELL
IN MERIBEL

THE British discovered Méribel as a place to ski shortly before the second world war, but today it will be in the hands of the Austrians, Germans and Swiss. It is the women's turn, after the men's last Saturday, to contest the most prized Alpine medal, the downhill. Nobody is betting against Peter Kronberger.

The course, on the Roc de Fer, has again put Bernhard Russi, the designer of the men's and women's pistes, at the centre of controversy. Kronberger is not happy with it, which is as much of an insult to the locals as Steffi Graf complaining to Wimbledon about the grass on centre court.

When Patrick Ortibie won the men's downhill on La Face de Bellevarde in Val d'Isère, he refused to change his opinion. He had said beforehand, and he said it again with the gold medal in his possession, that the course was too slow and an inadequate challenge.

Kronberger, attempting to give Austria the downhill double, is complaining because this one is too challenging. "The jumps are dangerous," she said. "They are not necessary. The downhill can be spectacular without those high jumps."

On the second of two jumps, which is taken blind, the skiers fly through the air for up to 140 feet. When they land, the surface runs away to the left, while competitors need to turn sharp right. If their adjustment before take-off is imperfect, the chances are they will crash into the safety net. It was there that Sabine Glinther, winner of the most recent World Cup downhill in Grindelwald, suffered injuries in training on Tuesday which put her out of the Games, and four others crashed.

Report angers skiers

BRITISH freestyle skiers are angry at being labelled "Olympic tourists" in a newspaper report. The five members of the moguls team were upset by the report, which compared them to Eddie "The Eagle" Edwards, and suggested they should not be in Albertville.

"My skiers are full-time and dedicated competitors," Jonathon Bayntun, the British team manager, said. "To



5



Victory salute: Anne Briand, of France, celebrates her team's victory in the 5-kilometre biathlon relay event at Les Saisies yesterday

PICTURES BY DAVID POWELL FROM THE WINTER OLYMPICS

Nordic skiing

Blairton Women's 3 x 7.5km relay (Les Saisies)

New event

FRANCE WIN: 1, France (C Nigot, V Clément, A Briand), 1hr 59m 55.2sec; 2, Germany (U Orl, A Messerer, P Schmitt); 3, United States (J Lefebvre, J Foy, C Léveillé); 4, Austria (T Goller, J Seitz, J Perner); 5, Sweden (B Berglund, B Karlsson); 6, Bulgaria (I Kostov, P Petkova); 7, Norway; 8, Switzerland; 9, Italy; 10, Czechoslovakia; 11, Poland; 12, Romania; 13, Spain; 14, Canada; 15, Italy; 16, France; 17, Norway; 18, Italy; 19, Switzerland; 20, United States; 21, Sweden; 22, United States; 23, France.

ENI Jumping

120m high hill Team event (Courchevel)

Age group

FINAL RESULT: 1, Finland (P-Nikola, M Latvala, R Lassila, T Nieminen); 2, France (A Brändström, E Vettori, M Höglund, J-P Laiho); 3, Norway; 4, Germany; 5, Austria; 6, Switzerland; 7, Czechoslovakia; 8, Sweden; 9, Bulgaria; 10, Italy; 11, Norway; 12, France; 13, Poland; 14, Spain; 15, Italy; 16, Romania; 17, Norway; 18, France; 19, Italy; 20, United States; 21, Sweden; 22, United States; 23, France.

ENI Jumping

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ENI Jumping

120m high hill Team event (Courchevel)

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ENI Jumping

120m high hill Team event (Courchevel)

Age group

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GOLF

James makes cut and then quits Málaga masters

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

MARK James withdrew from the Turespaña Masters in Málaga yesterday — after surviving the halfway cut in 36th place. The Ryder Cup player, joint third in Dubai last Sunday, exercised his right to withdraw without giving a reason after shooting a 76 that dropped him from four behind the leader Mark McLean, to eight behind.

James, a member of the tour's tournament committee, will not face disciplinary action.

Andy McFee, the tournament director, said: "He acted completely within our rules. A player has an obligation to complete any round he starts, but if he wishes to withdraw at the end of it, that's his business."

"I think it's a good rule. What we don't want to see is a player walking off the course, à la Ronan Rafferty in the US Open. But if the rule is abused consistently, we will review it."

James, who walked out of the Monte Carlo Open a few years ago, ran up a triple-bogey seven on the 417-yard fifth — his 14th — but also had four birdies on the small, tricky greens.

He became the second Ry-

der Cup man to pull out, Colin Montgomerie having done so complaining of flu after an opening 80. Steve Richardson is also on his way home. He could not recover from his first day 82, with two bogeys in his last four holes killing him off at eight-over-par.

But Seve Ballesteros improved nine strokes with his 69, and is seven adrift of McLean and one behind José María Olazábal, who wasted an outward 32 by coming in 39.

McLean had an eagle three at the 496-yard 16th to thane for staying out in front. But after a 72, he admitted: "I didn't play that well and I've allowed the field to come closer to me. It's a hard weekend ahead."

The eagle — he smashed a four-wood to eight feet — made up for bogeys on the 13th and 15th, where he missed the greens and failed to sink seven-foot return putts.

Joint second, one stroke behind, are Daniel Silva (68) of Portugal, and Anders Forslund (70), of Sweden, with Gordon Brand Jr, Gary Singh, of Fiji, and Gary Evans a shot further back.

Daly leaves empty-handed

FROM MITCHELL PLATT, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN MELBOURNE

JOHN Daly, the long-hitting US PGA champion, made a premature departure from the Australian Masters here yesterday.

Having added an 81 to his first round of 77, Daly missed the cut by a handsome margin, but that was not all. He also failed to sign his card, and was disqualified.

It is the second time in under two months that Daly made such an immature error. He was disqualified from the world championship in Jamaica in December for signing for one shot fewer than he took.

His disqualification here means that he will not be eligible for a special prize for the longest drive at the 14th, which is a gold golf ball valued at Aus\$15,000.

"It's embarrassing really to play this badly," he said. "I haven't played a good overseas tournament, and it's starting to get to me. I want to play well when I'm in another country, although if it's not going to happen then it doesn't make sense to travel. It's starting to wear me out."

I'm very frustrated." Daly's presence in Australia has attracted much attention. The spectators who followed him here on the Huntingdale course were mesmerized by his power especially with the driver. He had four birdies in succession from the 7th, but as he gave back the shots just as quickly as he had gathered them.

He had time to express regret at Daly's problems: "My advice to him would be to pull the reins back a little bit. I like the way I was."

Daly, holding his hands in the air, pleads that he is "just a good old country boy from Dardanelle, Arkansas". The trouble with that is that Arnold Palmer, with whom all America appears to be comparing him, was a good old country boy from Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

Greg Norman, another good old country boy whose reputation, like Palmer's, is beyond reproach, has responded to the task of getting his golf game back in order.

Norman, without a win for 20 months, claimed the outright halfway lead with a round of 70 for a total of 139. "I'm very happy," he said.

"I'm looking forward to the weekend which I haven't

done for a long time. I'm working harder now than I have for 18 months and the thing is you can't go out and perform well if you don't work hard. I have pride and I want to be back to where I was."

He had time to express regret at Daly's problems: "My advice to him would be to pull the reins back a little bit. I like the way I was."

Norman entered the third round with a three-shot lead over Roger Mackay, who scored 73. David Feherty had three birdies in a flawless round of 70 with which he survived the halfway cut on 149.

LEADING SECOND-ROUND SCORES
1. 70. 1. 139. R. Mackay (73). 2. 70. 144. M. Colangelo (78). 3. 70. 88. S. Singh (71). 4. 72. 142. G. Norman (74). 5. 70. 140. J. Morris (78). 6. 72. 139. R. Mackay (73). 7. 72. 142. G. Feherty (78). 8. 72. 139. P. Lawrie (75). 9. 72. 142. G. Norman (78). 10. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 11. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 12. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 13. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 14. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 15. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 16. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 17. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 18. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 19. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 20. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 21. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 22. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 23. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 24. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 25. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 26. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 27. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 28. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 29. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 30. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 31. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 32. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 33. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 34. 72. 140. P. Lawrie (75). 35. 72. 140. P. 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return at Sandown
Alner has
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Cool Ground to claim Eider for Balding

IF ANY trainer knows what it takes to win the Tote Eider Handicap Chase at Newcastle, it is surely Toby Balding, who won this marathon three years out of four in the Sixties with Highland Wedge before striking again, after an interval of 15 years, with Lucky Vane.

This time he relies on Cool Ground, who has top weight following that victory in the John Hughes Grand National Trial at Chepstow a fortnight ago.

Since the two stable companions Killone Abbey and Stay On Tracks are the only other runners who will be carrying their correct handicap weight, Cool Ground would appear to have an excellent chance of taking the prize back to Dorse in the care of Jimmy Frost, and he is my nap.

It was at this stage of last season that Cool Ground impressed Frost with his high cruising speed when winning the Jim Ford Challenge Cup at Wincanton.

Harness that speed to the stamina that he showed when winning the Welsh National and the Anthony Mildmay Peter Cazalet Memorial

MICHAEL PHILLIPS

Chase last season, and he should be capable of giving 21lb to Stay On Tracks, who has won on the course six times.

I do not subscribe to the view that Cool Ground would not have won last time had Shoo Wind not fallen at the second-last fence, although it would have been close. As it was, Cool Ground beat Just So by seven lengths, with Honeybeer Mead close behind in third. He meets them now on the same terms.

Gale Again who benefited from Carlisle's fall to win the Dipper Novices' Chase five weeks ago, is taken to give a repeat performance in the Newcastle Building Society Nova Plus Novices' Chase this Saturday, as is Take a Chance, who has been entered for the Axile Trophy at Cheltenham, is taken to get the better of the other Axile entries in the Nottinghamshire Novices' Chase, while the Narbrol City Trial Hurdle can go to Cheerful Times, who looked unlucky not to beat the subsequent Tote Gold Trophy winner, Rodeo Star, at Ascot last time.

At Nottingham, Deep Sea, who has been entered for the Axile Trophy at Cheltenham, is taken to get the better of the other Axile entries in the Nottinghamshire Novices' Chase, while the Narbrol City Trial Hurdle can go to Cheerful Times, who looked unlucky not to beat the subsequent Tote Gold Trophy winner, Rodeo Star, at Ascot last time.

As far as the Newcastle Building Society Handicap Hurdle is concerned, it could not be with the Mark Dwyer-ridden Yorkshire Holly, who ran well at Haydock last time to finish fourth behind Trapper John, Burgrave, and Upton Park.

GOING: GOOD

SIS

1.45 EVERY CHANCE AT THE LAST CLAIMING HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,604; 2m) (6 runners)

1 1600 ENFANT DU PARADIS 18f (D.G.B) P Evans 4-11-10 J Driscoll (7)

2 6922 TANFIRIN BAY 12 (B.F.P) P Hodge 4-13

3 2158 PHALAROPE 10 (D.G.B) Mrs A Weston 4-11-10 M McCourt

4 3493 GRAMPS 10 (D.G.B) Mrs S Weston 4-10-10 J Adams

5 4000 KING'S RESIDENCE 8f 8f (D.G.B) Mr Weston 4-10-10 M Lynch

5-6 Tanfirin Bay, 2-1 Enfant Du Paradis, 8-1 Phalarope, 8-1 Gramps's Girl, 1-1 Gold, 1-1 King's Residence.

2.15 NARBROL CITY TRIAL HURDLE (Limited handicap: £5,433; 2m) (5)

1 25 ROYAL STANDARD 25 (V) C Brooks 8-190 R Balding

2 275 GREEN WILLOW 385 (D.G.B) J Gillett 10-10 D Murphy

3 3004 BANK VIEW 10 (D.G.B) N Trotter 7-11-10 M Hill

4 3510 SHOOTER 20 (D.G.B) Mrs S Oliver 8-11-10

5 1612 ELDER PRINCE 21 (D.G.B) Mrs A Weston 8-11-10 J Adams

6 5400 KINGS RESIDENCE 8f 8f (D.G.B) Mr Weston 4-10-10 M Lynch

5-6 Tanfirin Bay, 2-1 Enfant Du Paradis, 8-1 Phalarope, 8-1 Gramps's Girl, 1-1 Gold, 1-1 King's Residence.

2.45 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NOVICES CHASE (Grade II: 25,433; 2m) (5)

1 1111 CLAY COUNTY 48 (D.F.G.B) R Allen 7-11-12 B Stacey

2 1812 DEEP SENSATION 22 (D.F.G.B) J Gillett 7-11-12

3 0911 PEANUTS PET 28 (D.F.G.B) Mrs S Oliver 8-11-10

4 5332 HICKLETON LAD 42 (D.F.G.B) Williams 8-11-10

5-6 1430 KOTTERMAN 8f (D.F.G.B) Mrs I Clay 8-11-10 M McCourt

5-7 2770 ROYAL STANDARD 7f (D.F.G.B) M Brown

5-8 4047 GOLDFINGER 20 (D.F.G.B) Mrs S Oliver 8-11-10

5-9 5400 KINGS RESIDENCE 8f 8f (D.G.B) Mr Weston 4-10-10 M Lynch

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French play down talk of revenge in the five nations' championship in Paris

England out to make the running

FROM DAVID HANDS
 RUGBY CORRESPONDENT
 IN PARIS

IF ENGLAND win at the Parc des Princes here today, the received wisdom has it, then, they will win this season's five nations' rugby union championship and a second successive grand slam. Only the regrouping Welsh, at Twickenham, would stand in their way and these days their prospects are discounted.

How times have changed. Not only in regard to Welsh rugby but to the French game too; it is not so long ago that a sunny day's training in Versailles, such as yesterday's, would have produced nervous quips about Paris in the spring and its beneficial effects on French back play. Now it is the English who arrive for the 68th game in the series oozing confidence, the French who ponder their place in the hierarchy.

It is a confidence born of achievement; even four months ago it was not present to the same extent and the overt aggression and provocative play of the World Cup quarter-final in Paris was the consequence of two teams nervous of each other.

Will Carling and Philippe Sella, the respective captains, are in agreement about that match, which projected England towards the World Cup final and some famous French names into retirement. "We had a lot to prove," Carling said yesterday. "We had not found our form in the tournament and we had to find it then. The only similarity is that now we will need to play our best rugby if we are to win."

Sella eschews talk of revenge. "There is no comparison between the quarter-final and this match. This is not a knockout game but is part of a championship and for this French team, which has been together only six weeks, the important thing is the future." Parisians, therefore, have been told more of French successes at Albertville and of their football team going to Wembley next week than of any great expectations for les rugbymen.

Player after player in the French squad has emphasised the need for discipline. Pierre Berbizier, the coach, watching the match against Wales on video with his players, spotted a couple of punches being thrown and immediately sat down with

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	2	2	0	0	68	16	4
France	2	1	0	0	12	9	2
Wales	2	1	0	1	25	27	2
Scotland	1	0	0	1	7	25	0
Ireland	2	0	0	2	24	34	0

RESULTS: Jan 18: Ireland 15, Wales 16; Scotland 7, England 25, Feb 1: England 26, France 18, Wales 12; Ireland 17, Scotland 12; Mar 7:

MATCHES TO COME: Today: France v England; Ireland v Scotland; Mar 7: England v Wales; Scotland v France; Mar 21: France v Ireland; Wales v Scotland.

TV: TUES: Today, BBC 2, 10.30pm. Live coverage, France v England; then highlights of Ireland v Scotland (this morning). WED: France v Ireland in Scotland, followed by highlights from Paris. Tomorrow: BBC 2, 5.30pm: Rugby Special (highlights).

the offending player to tell him the error of his ways. Thus far, there has been more gratuitous inflammatory talk coming from England.

Of greater interest is the tactical approach that should bring England their fourth successive victory over France. The right wings, Saint-André and Halliday, may be fit but it is the strong men of the centre who will control the destiny. Will Berbizier's forward selection prove astute or will Carling's men run with the same brio as against Ireland?

French interests suggest that they want the ball kept in play, to keep set pieces to a minimum, to use the mauling strength of their tight forwards to create the advantage from which Cabannes and van Heerden can cause chaos for their backs to exploit. The three men of Bièges have been retained so the tortoise — *la tortue biègesis* — will creep forward once more and it is that expectation which persuaded England to recall Dean Richards.

But since England will go for the more ordered approach, as is their way, Richards is also there to tidy up possession at lineout, scrum and in the tackle. In the first two areas, against Scotland and Ireland, there was a lack of control which has been frustrating, even if the integration of two newcomers, Bayfield and Rodber, has pardoned accounted for it.

Rob Andrew will surely kick more frequently than he did against Ireland, which was a game that evolved from that madcap start. "We have scored a lot of points in the championship but we have yet to play our best," Carling said. "Whatever our record in Paris may be, you don't come here taking a win for granted."

"You adopt a different game plan for different teams. It's a worry that we



Helping hand: Richards finds support from his England team-mate, Probyn, left, in lineout practice during the build-up yesterday to the five nations' championship match against France in Paris

don't know much about their new players and how they are likely to use them. It's probably the first time for years that we are here with people expecting us to win and that's a position the French will enjoy."

But English players enjoy the Parc: the surface is good for the running game and, in their relaxed frame of mind, England will want to take advantage of their talented backs as well as their experienced forwards. Should they do so, they will create conditions for the spectacle which Berbizier, for one, seeks.

It is necessary, he says, to have a great tournament between great teams and he may have been pleased to be quizzed so frequently on violence. "I am not here to reassure the English about the rugby they will get."

"We want a team that will make an impression within the rules of this combative sport. This is the determining factor for the future of European rugby, because a great match does so much for the sport."

REPLACEMENTS: 16 J-L. Barouilly (Colombes); 17 P. Montaur (Agent); 18 A. Hubert (Toulon); 19 J-M. Cadieu (Toulouse); 20 O. Roumel (Dax); 21 P. Gaffet (Béziers).

France
 J-B Latord (Racing Club)
 P Saint-André (Montauban)
 *P Sella (Agent)
 F Meenel (Racing Club)
 S Vias (Bive)
 A Pernaud (Bive)
 F Galthié (Colomiers)
 G Lescabé (Agent)
 V Moscato (Bièges)
 P Gimbert (Bièges)
 J-F Tordj (Noy)
 M Cédilhon (Bougnac)
 C Mougeot (Bièges)
 L Cabannes (Racing Club)
 A van Heerden (Turbo)

15 Full Back
 14 Right wing
 13 Right centre
 12 Left centre
 11 Left wing
 10 Stand off
 9 Scrum half
 1 Prop
 2 Hooker
 3 Prop
 6 Flanker
 4 Lock
 5 Lock
 7 Flanker
 8 No 8

England
 J M Webb (Agent)
 S J Halliday (Perpignan)
 *W D Carling (Perpignan)
 J C Grecott (Agent)
 R Underwood (RAF/Luton)
 C R Andrew (Roudous)
 C D Morris (Ormskirk)
 J Leonard (Perpignan)
 B C Moore (Perpignan)
 J A Probyn (Wasps)
 M G Skinner (Perpignan)
 M C Bayfield (Northampton)
 W A Dooley (Preston Gtoborough)
 P J Winterbottom (Perpignan)
 D Richards (Leicester)

16 (men)
 14 (Perpignan)
 13 (Perpignan)
 12 (men)
 11 (men)
 10 (men)
 9 (men)
 1 (men)
 2 (men)
 3 (men)
 6 (men)
 4 (men)
 5 (men)
 7 (men)
 8 (men)

Referee: S R Hilditch (Ireland)
 REPLACEMENTS: 16 N J Heaton (Orrell); 17 D Peers (Harrowgate); 18 R Hill (Gwent); 19 M P Hydes (Orrell); 20 C J Oliver (Northampton); 21 T A K Rodber (Army/Northampton).

Last October's meeting in the World Cup quarter-final was the 67th international between England and France, of which England had won 36 and France 24.
 □ France over the last decade: 1982: France 15, England 27; 1983: England 16, France 18; 1984: France 32, England 18; 1985: England 9, France 8; 1986: France 29, England 10; 1987: England 15, France 12; 1988: France 11, England 9; 1989: France 7, England 29; 1990: England 19, France 18; France 10; England 19.

□ England's biggest winning margin was by 37-0 at Twickenham in 1911; the French equivalent was by 25 points during the 37-12 defeat in Paris in 1972.

□ The individual points record in the five nations' championship was set by Dean Richards in the 1911 match against France until Jonathon Webb also scored 22 points against Ireland a fortnight ago.

□ Today, Webb becomes England's most-capped full back with 26, overtaking Dusty Hare, and Dean Richards becomes the most-capped No 8 with 32, overtaking John Scott.

□ England have won the last four matches between the countries, a feat previously accomplished between 1923-6. England won the first 11 internationals played but France drew in 1922 and gained their first victory in 1927.

Jumpers' hopes soar

THE Winter Olympics is all jolly worthy, but where, oh where, is Britain's No. 1 ski jumper? Where, oh where, is James Lambert? Or Alan Jones? They both have a case for claiming, morally at least, to be the Brits' king of the hill. Ever since the excitement of Calgary, Lambert and Jones have been itching for a chance to beat Eddie Edwards in competition. None, of course, has made it to Eddie turned up but did not take part.

Eddie and his agent have attempted to get the Eagle relaunched, and they reopened relations with the British Ski Federation. The upshot was that Eddie went to train with Lambert and Jones in Germany, with plans for all three to take part in a regional competition — a deadly serious contest-within-a-contest among the three Brits. Eddie turned up but did not take part.

He still holds the British record of 75 metres from the 90-metre hill in Calgary. Lambert and Jones have been unable to acquire decent experience on the 90-metre hill. That is why Eddie's record stands and why neither Jones nor Lambert could win selection for the Olympics.

However, the Lowlanders ski jumping championships are set for March 6, and both the top Brits will be there. I don't know about Eddie.

Rhyme time

WHAT about that glorious celebration of the human spirit that was the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics in Albertville?

"Competitors nimble and quick as the wind,

Let's here the applause for the great Swaziland."

"Oh what a roar, to some it's a mania,

Cheering the team from Lithuania."

For the first time in living memory, this column is lost for words.

This is no bull

I BRING you news of a new sport: football. This is not a printing error. It is played in Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, and it is a sport in which two teams of 11 try to kick a ball into a goal. It is rather like another Brazilian game, except that there are also two bulls on the pitch. The game is divided into quarters: a fresh pair of bulls four times a game. Well, it must be less dangerous than playing Wimbledon.

SICCAVAN



Rugby league knows its place

KATE Hoey, Labour MP and raiser of sporting issues, recently asked Archie Hamilton what financial support was given to rugby league in the armed forces. None, was the answer. "There is insufficient support for the playing of rugby league to warrant its recognition as an official sport." Well, she asked, what sports do get financial backing? She received a list of 35 sports. These include netball, rounders and model aircraft.

Meanwhile, I have another suggestion for the list of forgotten honours. Peter Grundy proposes one of the greatest rugby players of all time, Billy Boston. League, of course; hence the omission. And Wigan, of course. Sorry, no peer jokes arise Sir Billy, Knight of This Column.

Aural assault

Frank riposte

I WOULD like to announce a special award to *Grandstand*. It is called the alienate-a-viewer award, for its achievement in putting together the nastiest blend of sport and music I have experienced. The choice of what seems the sound-track for a migraine to stress the delights of rugby union and cricket seems designed to send anybody over the age of 14 diving for the zapper.

IOC approves special bob helmet logo

La Plagne: The International Olympic Committee last night granted special dispensation for BMW helmets to be worn in today's two-man bobsleigh event, although they contravene the Olympic rules about logos (Chris Moore writes).

This followed a plea from Klaus Kotter, the president of the International Bobsleighing and Tobogganing Federation (FIBT), to the IOC. BMW has provided those teams using its helmets with a car for the season and also supplies vehicles to the FIBT officials.

According to IOC rules, sponsors are not allowed to advertise at the Games. The bobsleigh helmets have the BMW logo on the front.

The IOC committee ruled the helmets could be worn for both the two and four man competitions, at La Plagne, but that warned that this exception could not be interpreted "in any way" as a precedent for future Games.

Olympic results, page 29

Pringle fulfils potential

FROM ALAN LEE CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN CHRISTCHURCH

DEREK Pringle, as unassuming a character as the game of cricket possesses, is fast emerging as an influential figure in England's countdown to the World Cup, just one week away.

For a man who made his Test debut ten years ago at the age of 23, Pringle is only now playing the sort of cricket expected of him since his days as a dominant member of the Cambridge University XI. His bowling has matured, gaining penetration with the years, and he is finally beginning to bat with the authority of a powerful man.

Dermot Reeve was a worthy winner of the man-of-the-match award in Dunedin on Wednesday, but it was Pringle who struck the decisive blows in the late stages, never wasting a ball. And, although he took only one wicket, his bowling has made a significant impression on his captain, Graham Gooch.

It has not gone unnoticed by Gooch that the white balls, two of which will be used per innings in the World Cup, swing liberally, nor that Pringle seems the England bowler best equipped to put that to advantage.

Although intent on keeping every option open, game by

look of a thoroughly nice guy.

On tour, he is a moulding influence within the team. Socially nomadic, he fits contentedly from group to group and frequently does his own thing, perusing second-hand record shops for obscure rock music LPs or seeking out off-beat subjects in photographs, which he will pedantically take only in black-and-white.

Pringle, like everybody else, was rendered inactive yesterday morning by the weather, which forced England to postpone their planned net.

Gladstone Small, on his final full day here, was restricted to a run round the outfield and a fitting for his coloured kit, but he returned to the ground to bowl in afternoon sunshine and was still expected to play today.

New Zealand have so far taken only two-thirds of their budgeted income for this tour, and the Christchurch Test match was yesterday cited by the Board chairman, Peter McDermott, as the loss-leader. Unless a decent crowd turned up today — and whether the weather forecast reflects the pre-determined result of the series was a good portent — other provincial centres will be pressing for the most important matches.

Although intent on keeping every option open, game by

Injury to Mabbutt worries Shreeves

BY CLIVE WHITE

GARY Mabbutt, the Tottenham Hotspur central defender,

may have to be withdrawn from the England squad for the game against France at Wembley next Wednesday if he does not make better progress in his recovery from a knee ligament injury.

He has not played since being injured against Oldham Athletic three weeks and is doubtful for tomorrow's match against Crystal Palace at White Hart Lane. Mabbutt played in England's last two matches, against Turkey and Poland.

Unlike some other clubs, Tottenham do not bar their players from international duty if they are unfit to turn out for the club on the weekend before internationals.

But Spurs are concerned about Mabbutt's long-term fitness and would like to ensure his complete recovery in time for the second leg of their Rumbelows Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest.

"Gary's 90 per cent fit," Peter Shreeves, the Tottenham manager, said. "He was keen to play in the first leg against Forest last Sunday but did not want to let the side

down. Since then he has done only light training."

"Graham Taylor rang me last Sunday and I told him that, in my opinion, there would

WEEKEND TIMES

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15 1992

A countryman fights back



Suffolk-dweller Neil Lyndon, bracing himself for the summer invasion by preaching urbanites intent on recharging their batteries, wishes they would see the reality of country life and all go home

Countryside-dwellers will be overjoyed to hear that the countryside is falling from fashionable favour.

That centuries-old romance of the British scribbling classes with glade and glen, fell and fen seems to be shedding its Wordsworthian gloss. Wandering lonely as a cloud is beginning to be seen, praise be, as a bit of a drag.

In the last two years, countless famous scribes have described their discontent with the muddy paths, aggressive farmers, poor restaurants and uninspiring society of locals they discovered when they moved to the country, and, shaking the dung from their wellies and leaving their waxed cotton coats for sale at the village fete, they have headed back to the metropolis.

In the early and mid-1980s some of those same names were filling columns declaring that the difficulties of finding a parking space or a reliable nursery had made life in the city impossible. In the next breath, they then wrote articles celebrating their move to the honeysuckle-scented cottage, the heart-warming financial deal they did in exchanging the maisonette in Clapham for the shepherd's cottage on the moors, the eternal values of rural schools and of easy parking at the village pub.

It didn't last. By the turn of the decade, metropolitan writers' honed lines of love and jubilant self-satisfaction had soured. Stephen Pile lasted about five months in his rural fastness before he turned it in and penned a cracking piece of sarcasm about the boredom of country life. Lynn Barber only had to spend a weekend in the country, discovering that some people there unashamedly enjoy fox-hunting and don't mind saying so, to conclude that Fleet Street marked the outer boundary of civilisation.

In the early 1980s Nigel Hamilton ploughed much of the seedcorn he had garnered from his biography of Montgomery into a hall of a house in mid-Suffolk. By 1987 he and his family were back in Pimlico, central London. The following year they took off for America.

The phenomenon, if it be that, merits encouragement, consolidation and extension. The fewer urbanites who take it into their heads to flee this way, the better. For those (why should I pretend to speak for others? I speak for myself) who make their lives in the countryside and endure its deprivations for the sake of its pleasures, nothing is more vexing than the arrival of city migrants who say that they have come "to

recharge their batteries" or to "soak in the peace" — as if the countryside requires nothing of its human inhabitants but a passive receptivity, like a lap-top plugged into the mains supply.

Daytrippers, weekenders, holidaymakers or would-be residents alike, the dead batteries exhaust the patience of those who realise the benefits of country living in the anti-metropolitan pursuit of serious solitude, together with the continuous, active development of interests that can only be followed in the country.

Those benefits are not returned from the countryside in a weekend, a few weeks, or even a year or two. As a rough rule of thumb it takes seven years of concentrated effort and thought to come completely to terms with a garden and all its contents, with the lie of its land and the qualities of its soil, with the pattern of its colours and the balance of its shapes. Gardening in any shorter time is not much more than the dressing of window boxes. It is not serious.

Unless it is invested by its inhabitant with passionate enthusiasm, expressed in dedicated activity, the countryside is nothing more than an ornate tableau of twee green decoration — one which describes a pattern of ownership rather than the hand of God.

You can't make the most of the country unless you love being alone, and/or you care enough about gardens or birds, boats or horses, shooting or fishing. You have to want to spend the most energetic years of an adult life cultivating the knowledge and understanding of exclusively rural industriousness. If these absorptions are not your speed, you had better stay away. You may count on one certainty: you won't find friends here.

On a mid-winter morning some years ago, I took a Hollywood producer and his wife to my favourite beach, a mile from our house. While I gave them my routine speech about the two centuries of redundant military

defences that lay about them — displaying preparations for four invasions which never came, Napoleon, Imperial German, Nazi and Soviet — the producer gazed despairingly at the bleak banks of shingle and the cold inhospitality of the North Sea.

"What do you do for friends here?" he asked. He quickly found his own answer: "Nobody in their right mind, I guess, would come here for society."

The best time in the country is when the dead batteries of urban society transport themselves to other, more distant, spots for reinvigoration; that time is now. Those who impose upon themselves solitary confinement in the

Sea, silent but for the calls of shelduck, widgeon and teal. A cormorant jetted its undeviating flight down the middle of the river 5ft above the water.

Four months, after Easter, that bird will have to fly a tortuous multiple chicane through and among the masts of boats at their moorings. The yachtsies and the cruisers, the yellow wellies and the nautical caps will have returned for their plundering, honking, hooting pleasures and a passage down the river will, again, be like driving down the M25 on bank holidays.

The publicans will paste on their pecuniary grins: the rest of us — locals, as they call us — will bulk.

After Easter, we rural solitaires withdraw into our gardens or let our houses to holidaymakers, and sail away for the summer. Outnumbered by a thousand to one, we know we're temporarily ticked. Our surrender, however, is expedient: we also know that we will resume title to the countryside when the frosts and fog return.

The scale of this revolution can be grasped if we say that it matches the contemporaneous transformation of the print industry, with the introduction of the new technology which made the old craft unions redundant.

That revolution in printing has received a thousand times the attention that has been given to the present-day agricultural revolution — chiefly, it appears to me, because the scribbling classes are more concerned with their own business.

Ten years ago each of the three big farms that lie around my village employed about 16 workers. In consequence, the village was genuinely a farming community and the farmers still occupied a square-arched social role, organising feasts and barn dances, cricket matches and village parties. Today, each one of those farms employs two or three workers.

Most of their acres have been "set aside" or sub-let to pig breeders. Their remaining land is worked by the vast machines the farmers bought in the 1980s and now struggle to pay for: or it is managed by contracted firms of agents who, in turn, employ their own sub-contractors and casual workers.

Convulsive social consequences have resulted from these unanticipated changes. The village is no longer a farming community. More teachers live here now than farm workers.

The farmers have abandoned their square-arched role and appear to be beleaguered. We hardly ever see them, except when they are hurtling along the lanes in

and difficulties of the ride. But I can't stomach the society of most of those who pursue those pleasures. We leave each other alone, content with mutual dislike. It doesn't seem much to ask that we should also be left alone by those who tramp on to our patch, intent on our conversion and salvation, yet are clueless about our ways.

A similar measure of exasperating incomprehension frustrates conversations between townies and locals over the working of the land. Very few town people have realised that a technological and economic revolution has overtaken the farming industry in the last decade, bringing social and agricultural changes as great as the slaughter of the working horses half a century ago.

The scale of this revolution can be grasped if we say that it matches the contemporaneous transformation of the print industry, with the introduction of the new technology which made the old craft unions redundant.

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which they might have been born have been done up and let to incomers, holidaymakers or dead beaters, leaving the locals to find a council house or to shack up with family. Guaranteed wages, pensions and secure accident compensation have largely been eliminated from the industry.

Next to none of these changes have been considered important by the urban-dominated national media. The broad truth is that townies do not wish to know about the realities of life in the country.

The absence of care, however, is not what gets on country people's nerves. It is the lightness of flirtatious interests that gets us down. Nothing could be more pleasing than the prospect, as it appears, that the one-sided flirtation may now be ending, and that we may, as a result, have a better chance of being left alone.



Refugee: Neil Lyndon enjoying the calm before the invasion

"The fewer urbanites who decide to flee this way, the better"

country are now enjoying their season of reward — that brief moment when nobody else wants to be here.

One afternoon this week I walked with the dogs for more than an hour beside the river and over the heath to the Sutton Hoo burial site, and saw nobody. A single tractor and trailer were moving on the fields, never less than a mile away. The water was deserted from the Woodbridge harbour clear down the 11 miles to Felixstowe ferry and the North

preaching about the virtues and the vices of the countryside and the ways of its inhabitants.

It is more than mildly galling to go to the pub or the post office and find oneself on the receiving end of a lecture from a stranger, delivered with missionary zeal, on the horrors of blood sports. When the visitor is clad in a soft leather jacket and has just purchased a ham sandwich or a chunk of steak, I usually find myself saying that a society that annually butchers half a billion terrified and screaming animals for human consumption is displaying an odd sense of moral values when it gets more excited about the plight of the few hundred or few thousand foxes killed every year by hunts.

Being a lover of horses but not, generally, of huntsmen, I do not hunt. I feel that I fully understand the attraction of the chase across open country and the pleasures

of hunting in my bed. Kay Maries goes shopping for bedroom furniture straight out of a fairytale

The farmers have abandoned their square-arched role and appear to be beleaguered. We hardly ever see them, except when they are hurtling along the lanes in

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Page 14

□ Television: Lynne Truss on programmes good enough for heaven Page 3 □ Gardening: A Euro-threat to British fruit Page 9 □ Out of town: Riding the range in Perth Page 15

FILM

ADDAMS FAMILY (PG): Tasty feast of black humour, inspired by the 1960s TV spin-off from Charles Addams's macabre cartoon. Starring Raul Julia, Anjelica Huston, Christopher Lloyd; director, Barry Sonnenfeld. MGM/Theatres (071-434 0031) Odeon: Kensington (0426 914666); Macaulay (0426 914666).

BARTON FINK (15): The Coen brothers' macabre comedy about a New York playwriter, still in sea in 1940s Hollywood. Starring John Turturro, Jack Palance. A triple prize-winner at last year's Cannes Film Festival. Gate (071-737 0433) Lumière (071-536 0691); Screen on the Hill (071-445 5388).

BLACK HOLE (15): Seventies' conspiracy Jesus (Lohitash Bhattacharya) tries to convert agents in northern Quebec. Subtly epic from Brian Helgeland; director, Bruce Beresford.

CANNONBALL ROAD (071-434 0031): Now Trocadero (071-434 0031) Piccadilly (071-437 3561).

BLAME IT ON THE BILLBOY (12): Michael Richards in Venice Imperialist, cocaine-fuelled, old fashioned, one. With Dudley Moore, Robert Griffin, Patsy Kensit. Writer-director, Mark Herman.

CANNONBALL ROAD (071-434 0031): Now Trocadero (071-434 0031) Piccadilly (071-437 3561).

GOOD ROCKIN' TONITE

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Fifties and Sixties pop classics.

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Strand, Aldwych, WC2 (071-240 0300). Mon-Thurs, 8pm, Fri, Sat, 5.30pm and 8.30pm.

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN

Juliet Stevenson, Bill Paterson and Michael Byrne in West End transfer of Abel Dorfman's exceptionally powerful play

concerned with the trauma of torture. Best play of 1991.

Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-833 5122).

Previews tonight, Mon, 8pm.

Opens Tues, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs, 8pm, Sat, 4pm.

MURMURING JUDGES

David Hare's rotting legal system: gaps in the context but

a powerful bout.

National (Lyttleton), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Tonight, Mon, 7.15pm, mat today, 2pm.

PROBLEM CHILD II (PG)

Daunting sequel to an already dire

original, with Michael Oliver (the delinquent tyke), John Ritter (the divorced dad), and much

more.

Compton, Tottenham Court Road (071-838 5145) Metro (071-437 0757) & Box Office at Baker Street (071-838 4772).

THE FAULT IN THE WATCH AND THE VERY BIG FISH (15)

Frisch's touching drama, a French cross-section of devotional scenes (Ecclesiastes)

struggles to find his Christ. With Jeff Goldblum, Mira Sorvino, Richard Dreyfuss, Ben Lewin.

Odeon: Kensington (0426 915353).

FOR THIERRY (15): Song-and-dance team entertain troops in three acts, only to be ruined by a synthetic script. With Béatrice Mador, Jeanne Caen, director, Mark Rydell.

Odeon: Kensington (0426 915353).

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Odeon: Kensington (0426 915353).

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FRANKIE AND JOHNNY (15)

Short-order cook (Al Pacino) courts a wary waitress (Michelle Pfeiffer). Synthetic adaptation of Terrence McNally's play.

Director, Garry Marshall

Barbie (071-838 8891)

Cannon, Fulham Road (071-370 2636) Empire (071-497 9999)

MGM/Theatres (071-434 0031)

Whiteleys (071-792 3332)

HORS LA VIE (15)

Mastery account of a French hostage's life

in the turmoil of Beirut. Starring Hippolyte Girardot; director, Maroun Bagdadi.

Cannon, Tottenham Court Road (071-838 6404)

Empire (071-497 9999)

Screen on the Green (071-226 3520) Whiteleys (071-792 3332)

THE COTTON CLUB: An impression of the Harlem nightspot high on energy, low on story freshness.

Aldwych, The Aldwych, WC2 (071-838 6404), Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm.

DANCING AT LUGHNASA:

Brian Friel's Olivier Award-winning

memory-play, set in 1930s Donegal.

Garrick, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (071-494 5085), Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4pm.

THE GIGI CONCERT: Barry

Foster is obsessed with making an Irish millionaire (Tony Doyle)

into the new Gigi in Tom Murphy's

powerful fab.

Almeida, Almeida Street, N1 (071-359 4404), Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat, 4pm.

GOOD ROCKIN' TONITE:

Satisfying musical celebrating

Fifties and Sixties pop classics.

Graffiti stuff.

Strand, Aldwych, WC2 (071-240 0300). Mon-Thurs, 8pm, Fri, Sat, 5.30pm and 8.30pm.

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National (Lyttleton), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Mon, 7.15pm, mat today, 2pm.

STAR VS THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY

(PG): So farewell, Kirk

and Spock, battling galaxy war-

mongers in their last screen

adventure. Underwhelming, but

adequate. With William

Shatner, Leonard Nimoy; director,

Nicholas Meyer. MGM (0426 915353).

URGA (PG): Nikita Mikhalkov's

miserable film about civilisation encroaching on the Mongolian steppes. The top prize-winner at last year's Venice Film Festival.

Curzon Mayfair (071-455 8865).

WITNESS

Michael Caine plays Uncle

Vanya in a new production

of Chekhov's

THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA

Alfred Molina and a superb Eileen

Atkins in Tennessee Williams's

play on the various effects of

sexual repression.

National (Lyttleton), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Mon, 7.15pm, mat today, 2pm.

STAR V THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY

(PG): So farewell, Kirk

and Spock, battling galaxy war-

mongers in their last screen

Case of the custard eruption

Lynne Truss on where programmes go when they die — and the reincarnation of Maigret

A gains a dazzling backdrop of bright azure sky and white wispy clouds, Frank Muir sits on a tall stool and tells us about *TV Heaven*, his twinkling manner faintly reminiscent of the angel Clarence in *It's a Wonderful Life*.

We viewers suck our fingers and jig in our seats. Oh, goody, it is Saturday at 8pm, and Channel 4's new retro slot is about to start, with three and a half hours of programmes and titbits from 1967. We are in for a treat, then; and probably growing a bit light-headed in anticipation. Hello clouds, hello sky, hello classic *Coronation Street*. But then Uncle Frank leans forwards and smilingly explains the evening's conceit, for those of us too excited to work it out. TV heaven, he says, is where TV programmes go to — but only if they're good.

Well, I'm sure he meant it kindly, but it was still a very sobering piece of news. I instantly stopped feeling excited, and started feeling worried. Had somebody mentioned moral absolutes? Had *Paradise Lost* somehow got mixed up with *The Prisoner*? I was assailed by visions of "bad" television being cast from the empyrean and tumbling through the everlasting night of the cosmos — and it seemed a bit out of proportion, somehow. I mean, *Brides of Christ* is certainly bad but it surely doesn't deserve eternal damnation.

Imagine the end of each average broadcasting day in 1992. A moving staircase, the tick of the metronome and crowds of lacklustre sit-coms ascend to the gates in long, dreary lines. At the top, Jeremy Paxman (with a halo) checks each name in a big book, shakes his heavy head — and whoops, there goes another one.

TV Heaven put an interesting complexion on the week's viewing, however. Which were the chosen? Each instalment of *Olympics 92* (BBC1/BBC2), for example, surely held the potential for a place in the TV firmament, alongside the mauve-chiffoned Botticelli image of Torvill and Dean, but early in the week

Perhaps the lesson of *TV Heaven* is that, instead of committing programmes to memory, we should pray for their immortal souls, and get on with something else.

No doubt the old Rupert Davies *Maigret* series is comfortably ensconced in the abode of the blessed; so perhaps we earth-crawlers should simply forget about it.

Whether or not the new Michael Gambon version will gain entrance is of course a matter for the great Paxman in the sky. But to judge from the relaxed dramatic pace of the first 90-minute episode ("The Patience of Maigret").



Patience of a saint: Michael Gambon filling the screen, and taking the human approach, as the great Maigret

by Alan Plater), at least one can be sure that Gambon's Maigret would quite cheerfully bide a few years in limbo, if called upon to do so. Yea, even unto seventy times seven.

The point about Maigret is that he doesn't dash about finding clues, or solving cases by crunching his little grey cells together. He takes the more human approach: as one of Simenon's commentators phrased it, each Maigret case is less a problem to resolve than a drama to be understood.

Thus observing the apartment house where a murder has occurred, Maigret sits across the square at an outdoor cafe and remarks philosophically that each tenant has his own history, his own morality. In Maigret's world there are no criminals: just people "driven to the limit". "Round up the usual suspects" is not a command that springs readily to his lips, because it would mean arresting the entire population of Paris. So, if it takes seven years properly to solve a series of jewel robberies, it is merely a tribute to this chief inspector's famous patience.

Gambon is terrific as Maigret. His great quality is to fill the screen without appearing to, just as Maigret quickly subsumes all the characters into himself, in order to "understand the drama". This must be a little disconcerting for the other actors, come to think of it, but perhaps the series was safely in the can before anybody twigged the problem. Think of any scene in "The Patience of Maigret", however, and it's true: the other actors just fade into the wallpaper with a resigned little wave. Bye bye Cheryl Campbell, bye bye Trevor Peacock.

Finally, perhaps the high point of the week was in *Tuesday's Food and Drink* (BBC2), which reported on the phenomenon of drinks that explode after being heated in microwave ovens. This is a serious problem, apparently. An innocuous bowl of piping-hot custard, fresh from the microwave, suddenly turns into Mount St Helens on the dinner table: warmed-up coffee jumps straight out of the cup like a chorus-girl from a birthday cake) and shrieks. "You want caffeine? Have I got caffeine before scalding your face."

Food and Drink accounted for itself very responsibly: it explained the physics, gave safety advice and laid centre on the proper authorities for not obliging manufacturers to give proper instructions. But the fascination of the item, the reason it made you jump up and down off the sofa, was that you desperately wanted it to say, "For goodness sake, what's the hurry? Why don't you use a kettle, like everyone else?" Perhaps it was the influence of Maigret.

Shadows dim the sun over Little England

Paradise for many is the Costa del Sol. Channel 4 on Monday spells out the reality



Saturday night in Benalmadena: El Elefante bar is packed with British pensioners warbling "Edelweiss". This week, Leroy from Ireland is top of the bill. When the pony-tailed folk-singer finishes his turn he is met with applause and cries of "encore". It is midnight. He is very hot and very tired. "Don't you have homes to go to?" he asks.

They have indeed. These Guinness drinkers are not tourists but citizens of that corner of the Costa del Sol known as Little England. The set for the forthcoming BBC soap of that name is slowly going up in Coin, a 30-minute drive inland.

Next Monday at 9pm, a glimpse of expatriate life will be seen on Channel 4 in the two-part documentary *Coast of Dreams*, made by Touch Productions, whose *Watching the Detectives* series last year on real-life private eyes shattered many an illusion. This time round it is the characters, not the viewers, who have their rose-tinted spectacles removed.

In the first part, "Paradise in the Sun", reveals the economic reality that British would-be bar-owners face when they sell up their homes to live and work in Spain. Most of the 389 watering holes and 277 eateries in Benalmadena are run by the British for the British. There are too many bars and too few customers.

Mike and Bertie Thompson have had The Bee's Knees for six years. Their "traditional London boozer" is on the six-lane highway that connects Malaga to Estepona. "People look abroad, see the sun, remember the holiday atmosphere and start packing their bags," Mr Thompson says. "They forget that as a bar-owner you have to be 'on holiday' 365 days a year. It's

no good thinking that all you have to do is open the doors and the punters will come in and spend themselves silly, because they won't. You've got to make it that bit more pleasurable so that they'll keep on coming back, it's very hard work."

One day last summer the Thompsons served 186 roast beef lunches, with apple pie afters — all cooked by Mrs Thompson in the tiny kitchen, where the temperature simmered at 38C. In the early days Mrs Thompson, who had been on an expensive cookery course, made *tapas*, but the customers demanded cheese toasties.

In The Bee's Knees, its walls decorated with West Ham regalia, a collection of hats and snapshots of satisfied customers, a septuagenarian named Iris renowned for purring the bad into *lambada*, said: "I come back every year. It gets quite wild sometimes."

And the Thompsons, exhausted by the daily grind, and of being attacked or robbed, want out. They have found a buyer for The Bee's Knees, but a loophole in the lease has ensnared them in a legal battle that could cost them the bar and their home. Mrs Thompson is bitter: "There's only one law, and that is for the Spanish. Spain to me is a very sad country."

MARK SANDERSON

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Held captive in the back seat

PREVIEW

• Rides

(Tuesday, BBC1, 9.30pm)

It sounds like a sure-fire idea: Jill Baker plays a tough ex-soldier running an all-woman mini-cab firm in a series devised and written by Carole Hayman, of *Tenkō* fame. As with *Tenkō*, it seems, survival is the crux of the matter, but there are differences too — in particular, I would hazard, less exclamation, and more runs in the airport.

• Bookmark: Miss Pym's Day Out

(Wednesday, BBC1, 8.10pm)

More sterling work from *Bookmark*, with a tribute to the English novelist Barbara Pym, who died in 1980. *The Times Literary Supplement* once memorably said that Barbara Pym made "a scrupulously detailed picture of people living like mice in the wainscoting of life" — which is not only a perfect image, but also a nice reminder of the word *wainscoting*.

James Purnell's film is an adventurous dramatisation of a day in Barbara Pym's own quiet, wainscoted life. Fictional characters are mixed with

real ones (such as Jill Cooper) and Miss Pym is played by the very wonderful Patricia Routledge.

• Gardeners' World

(Friday, BBC2, 8.30pm)

The BBC's decision to commit *Gardeners' World* to an independent production company seems to have resulted in widespread panic. There was even some sort of alarmist rumour that we had seen the last of Barnsdale; and that we might never know the outcome of Geoff Hamilton's consumer tests on pest-substitutes. To sum up, then: a trying period for us all. So it is wonderful to report that Geoff returns next Friday with a new series and a new co-presenter (Liz Rigby, former editor of *The Archers*). A few regulars have been dropped (one imagines them impaled on pitchforks in Anne Swinburne's greenhouse), but this is not necessarily a reason for regret.

L.T.

GUILTY SECRETS: LIZ CALDER, Publisher

"Well, I'm not addicted to *Blind Date*. I always turn on the news and I would say I'm addicted to *What the Papers Say*, although I always manage to forget when it's on. I just like journalists talking about each other, and it's a sort of sideways view of the news, which you get through the journalist talking about newspapers. Each programme is presented by a journalist. Richard Ingrams is my favourite. I'm addicted to anything with Richard in it, because he makes me laugh. I'm addicted to all the old comedy programmes, such as *Fawlty Towers*, which I adore. I don't mind watching the repeats. I also like *Spitting Image*. My favourite thing is anything that makes me laugh."

1. 1992 Tax-Saving Guide

2. Safety at sporting events, concerts, etc.

3. Pub prices

4. Executive cars

5. Video games

6. Disposable cameras

7. Paint

8. Ionisers

9. The cost of moving house

10. No claims discounts

11. Fish

12. Being ill in the EC

13. Cross-Channel ferries

14. Misleading adverts

15. Roofs, brickwork and gutters

16. Fridge and freezer thermometers

17. Tyres

18. Colour print film

19. CD players

20. Credit cards: your questions answered

21. Irons

22. Permanent health insurance

23. Social security rates

24. The 'new' NHS

25. Orange juice

26. Car breakdown companies compared

27. Your rights in hotels and restaurants

28. Channel Tunnel safety

29. Internal air travel vs rail vs coach

30. Getting the best from your camera

31. Microwave ovens

32. Vacuum cleaners

33. Personal computer software

34. Citroën ZX, Astra and Nissan Sunny on test

35. Fridge freezers

36. Credit insurance

37. Budget 1992: tax changes

38. Borrowing

39. Food packaging

40. Sport and fitness

41. British Gas

42. Tennis shoes

43. Juice extractors

44. Video recorders

45. Toilet cleaners

46. Hand tools

47. Washing machines

48. Holiday money

49. Shares and share dealing

50. The politics of food

51. Switching your mortgage

52. Euronews: what's new in 1992

53. Washing-up liquid

54. Camcorders

55. Power showers

56. Large family cars

Islander's mistaken attempt to escape

DEREK WALCOTT's play was first performed in Los Angeles, where audiences would have been more aware of the irony of its title than the good citizens of NW6. These days the best of Motortown is unappraising as the worst of the City of Angels. Much of Woodward Avenue, before the riots of 1968, one of America's great streets, looks like war-torn Beirut.

When I lived nearby, as I did in the later 1980s, the great civic problems were how to stop children taking guns to school, how to control the proliferating crack houses, and how to prevent the populace burning down what was left of their city on Hallowe'en. To years to escape there, like the West Indian protagonist of *Viva Detroit*, is as eccentric as if some updated three sisters were planning to relocate in Chernobyl rather than in Moscow.

At any rate, it tells us plenty about Steve Toussaint's Sonny and his erratic relationship to reality. He is a blend of dreamer, gigolo and chameleon, quick to adopt whatever colouring will con women visitors to St Lucia out of their virtue and their jewellery.

When Marlene Mackey's Pat, a white photographer

THEATRE

Viva Detroit

Tricycle, Kilburn

from New York, appears at the hotel bar, he first of all passes himself off as a rich brash American who somehow combines aggressive Republican views with respect for Jesse Jackson. Finding this turns her off more than on, he takes aim at her liberal scruples, presenting himself as a poor, unspoiled native, outside "your luxurious glass and air-conditioning". But clearly that is not the most seductive of come-ons, either.

With Norman Beaton as a barman, exuding canny fatalism from beneath a wig that looks as though it were custom-designed for the singing nun in *The Sound of Music*, all this makes for a lively opening.

Toussaint is a strong, bold actor with as it turns out, a certain vulnerability beneath his cocky manner. Mackey is a bright, vivid addition to the Black Theatre Co-op's ranks, too.

No matter if they do not altogether convince us of the love that does eventually evolve between them, Walcott clearly wants to keep us

guessing about its authenticity and its durability.

The trouble is that too much guesswork is expected of us in a second half that, for all the assurance of Malcolm Frederick's direction, gets increasingly lost. Pat reappears from a trip back home, disguised as a grotesque slattern. She then inveigles Sonny into making a half-hearted sexual advance, reveals herself, threatens him with a pistol and finally offers him a forged American visa.

Before long, the play's tone has become as awkward and uncertain as its eventual outcome. There may, perhaps, be substance in Sonny's parting suggestion that Pat would find it hard to accept his transformation from a happy-go-lucky islander into a full-time American; but by now her motives are altogether inscrutable.

Besides, the play's grip has faltered so badly it is impossible to care very much if Sonny ends up in Detroit or Dacca. For similar reasons, it is difficult to take him quite as seriously as Walcott seems to ask.

Not only does he ruefully describe his function as being to boost the local economy by grinning as much and as widely as he can. Not only



MARILYN KINGWILL
Implausible trio: Marlene Mackey, Steve Toussaint (front) and Norman Beaton

Worth a detour

CONCERT

Nash Ensemble

St John's, Smith Square

create around themselves an almost tangible landscape of sustained harmony and slow change. There are cadenzas for cello and flute, the former reaching way over the treble stave and played with superb ease and definition by Caroline Dale. Yet all the time it seems to be the same journey that is going on, leading (if without geographical accuracy) through ice floes of high string harmonies to a sighting of the United States in a quotation from Ives's *The Unanswered Question*.

Also on this programme, the second of two typical Nash evenings combining focus (on Russia) with wide range, were Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence* and Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death*. Brian Bannatyne-Ston gave a splendid account of the latter, resolutely in control and authoritative, always musical, projecting dark nights of the soul and body by colour and weight of tone without histrionics. There was the promise here of a fine Boris Godunov.

PAUL GRIFFITHS

History lesson wears a smile

DANCE

Siyé Goli

Sadler's Wells

THE new show by Adzido Pan African Dance Ensemble is based on a text by Odia Oleimun, presenting elements from the history of southern Africa over the past two centuries. Speech and song introduce each dance, with a white-clad Priestess of Memory the one continuing character linking the others.

Not surprisingly, some of the most enthusiastic applause went to a vehement call to struggle for liberation, but the final message is of the need for all races to seek a peaceful way of sharing the land. There is humour as well as sincerity in the writing, not least in a neat caricature of Cecil Rhodes.

I assume that Rhodes was also the red-faced chap in a series of dances with highly sophisticated and amusing masks derived from Malawi. The variety of the consuming is extensive: the men's clothes are the more impressive, the women's are very gaudy.

A limitation of the dances is

that most of them offer quick repeated movements on the spot, or with only limited floor patterns. The vigour of the performers is exhilarating, but at times a feeling of sameness creeps in. So the episode when a woman ruler leads her followers, with cheerful belligerence, round and round the stage is all the more welcome by contrast.

Another highlight comes near the end in a Mbende dance from Zimbabwe. Originating as a celebration of the marriage of a chief's daughter, it includes a recurring motif for one couple after another who jump at each other, collide mid-air belly to belly, and bounce apart again. The allusion is obvious, explicit but light-hearted and not the least bit indecent.

I am not sure that the relationship of the various dances to the topics they were meant to illustrate was always entirely clear, but they do represent a wide anthology drawn from seven different countries, and covering a range of different moods. A group of drummers across the back of the stage keeps the energy fired all the time.

Apologies are due to Ballet Du Nord and to Sadler's Wells for a misunderstanding which caused my notice last week to describe it as a fringe company when what I wrote was a French company. I would be sorry to seem to suggest that London's nearest approach to a dance house was in the fringe business.

JOHN PERCIVAL

Genuinely hopeless?

ROCK RECORDS

Manic Street Preachers: Generation Terrorists (Columbia 471060 2)

induce sleep rather than passion. Manic Street Preachers may sound vibrant, young and sexy. In three-minute doses but, over the wastelands of a double CD, they might be middle-aged session hacks.

The extra-musical factors are less easily dismissed. The band has obvious appeal to innocent first-time record buyers. Pretty, pretentious, full of energy and righteous anger, they have all the basic ingredients of classic pop idols. Lyrics which attack global corporations, the alienation of consumerism and political hypocrisy exactly mirror the frustrations of a generation which feels that no gesture can escape the destiny of becoming a commodity, a marketing plan or an advertising slogan.

The quotes which they append to each track title come from sources as diverse as Philip Larkin, Nietzsche and Valerie Solanas. To somebody who has seen all this before, the effect is comic. Yet nobody could disagree entirely with their lift from the manifesto of the Futurists: "Regard all art critics as useless and dangerous."

Their debut album has sorted out the musical aspect at least. *Generation Terrorists* is a double album of dreary guitar clichés, likely to

DAVID TOOP

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Cards

A tale of two Koffmanns

Pierre Koffmann's *Memoires de Gascony* won last year's Glenfiddich award for food book of the year. It's a gastronomic autobiography of a sort that could not be written by a chef who had grown up in say, Somerset or on The Marches, or, indeed, anywhere in Britain during the period that Mr Koffmann describes, i.e. the 1950s and 1960s. With his French-based English collaborator, Timothy Shaw, he proves to be something of an Alain-Fournier of the stove. It is a book with a marked sense of place — a small village in the Gers; and with a marked respect for seasonal traditions, culinary resourcefulness and the earth. The author's grandparents were smallholders, his grandmother an inspiring cook whose recipes were, without exception, founded in the vernacular practice of her parish. The book is, of course, sometimes sentimental — but rarely mawkish. It is also eminently utile: the recipes are ones that most reasonably accomplished domestic cooks can tackle with confidence.

So what has Pierre Koffmann, gastro-poet of rural Gascony, got to do with Pierre Koffmann, chef-proprietor of *Tante Claire* in urban Chelsea? The answer used to be: not much. Both men answered to the same name, but beyond that the correspondences were few. The paramount reason for this bifurcation is perhaps explained simply by the fact of Mr Koffmann belonging to a generation of French chefs who trained and began to practise professionally in the late 1960s when a more or less revolutionary gale was blowing through the kitchens of grand restaurants.

In that climate his grandmother's cooking had no place. Now, a decade and a half after he opened *Tante Claire*, the peasant tradition, *cuisine de terroir*, is back in favour and — this is of more moment than you might believe — not likely to be frowned upon by the Michelin men, at least not in France. At this refined end of the culinary trade, the tyrannical influence of the rosette donors should never be underestimated: they encourage inhibition and a sort of self-censorship. And *Tante Claire* has two rosettes, hard won and not to be let go of by the injudicious introduction of dishes insufficiently elaborated for Michelin's taste. So the process of convergence between the two Koffmanns has been gradual, almost imperceptible.

Now, at last, *Tante Claire* seems to be biased towards the provision of dishes which its chef's grandmother would acknowledge as having much in common with hers. Not that the grandson ever

Ancient techniques from rural Gascony reign in urban Chelsea, says Jonathan Meades

went overboard for wayward novelty, but he did have an orientalising phase, and he did toy for a while with the deracinated cooking that was all the rage in flash restaurants in the first half of the 1980s. But, as I say, the southwestern accent is now pronounced. And the results are felicitous in the extreme.

It need hardly be pointed out that Mr Koffmann's is not that kind of clichéd south-western cooking which Paul Bocuse characterised as "can-opener cooking": the accent is not mummified.

Tante Claire is a very smooth, very urbane outfit with a pretty, Vogue Regency interior by David Collings. The cooking matches. It is currently, beautifully balanced and as accomplished as any in Britain. I say "currently" because this has not, in my experience, been the most consistent of kitchens. But let that pass. A dinner last week was faultless. Every department of the kitchen manifested real virtuosity.

The kind of peasantly Gascon pastry that Mr Koffmann refers to in his book as "patis" crops up here and there — with poppy seeds, as a "parcel" for shredded duck confit, as a sort of superior cream puff in an apple dish. Patis has nothing to do with the anti-seed-flavoured aperitif but, probably, something to do with the kindred Moroccan pastry of a similar name. There is a persistently light touch with sauces, when they are used: the formula of a sauce with everything is not adhered to. Turbot, for instance, is served with *garbure*, the cabbage and confit soup that is a southwestern staple, but which can rarely have been used in such a manner. It is, however, an unmitigated success — one of those rare fish and meat combinations that comes off. Scallops are done with squid ink and a sweet pepper purée. Duck is served in four ways: rare roast breast, wine-braised leg, stuffed neck, confit, as I said, in pastry with sweet-sweated onions. Each item is different from the



next, but there is sufficient carnal kinship for the whole to hold together. Woodcock is prepared in the classic manner, beak and all, its offal on a crouton. The numerous breads (shallot and bacon, tomato, olive, corn) are first rate. So, too, the cheeses, which are all French save an intruder from Scotland, Lanark Blue. Among the sweets is an all-apple number: sorbet, soufflé, croutade, gratin.

This was a marvellous meal. Nothing was redundant, nothing was lacking. It is very expensive — with a half of a meaty 1985 Châteauneuf and two glasses of house wine the bill was £150. But, of course, it is quite possible to fork out such a sum at all sorts of inferior places. And the set lunch costs considerably less than half that sum. Nor, it appears, that money is much of a problem for

this outfit's punters. It was full on a mid-week evening and certain of the tables were twice occupied. I trust that Mr Koffmann will find less to comfort him at Parc des Princes this afternoon.

Tante Claire
⑥ Royal Hospital Road, SW3
(071-332 6045).
Lunch and dinner Mon-Fri.
£130 plus. Set lunch £70.

JONATHAN MEADES'S RESTAURANT GUIDE

Marks — up to a maximum of ten — are awarded for cooking and although they are intended to reflect value for money they are not determined by this consideration alone: certain very costly restaurants are very good, certain very cheap ones are, too. All prices given are approximate — they are for a three-course meal for two, including modest wine and an aperitif. Dishes are mentioned only as an indication of the repertoire. Never be afraid to complain. Phone first. It is not only discourteous but illegal to dishonest bookings: that goes for restaurants as well as customers. J.M.

SCOTLAND

Pierre Victoire
④ 10 Victoria Street, Edinburgh 1
(031-225 1721).

Chaotic, cramped, noisy, animated bistro in Edinburgh Old Town. The cooking, within its limitations, is mostly pretty good and is excellent value for money. Scallops with warm smoked salmon, halibut with mussels, pork with mango sauce. The service is liable to disruptions. £35. Lunch and dinner every day, except Sunday.

AMERICAN COOKING

Kenny's
③ 70 Heath Street, NW3,
(071-435 6972).

Cajun restaurant with loud cajun music. Good cocktails, good beers, and some good cooking. The ubiquitous banana tastes like corn chips from a packet. There is little variety in the spicing, most dishes taste pretty much the same, i.e. hot and aggressive. £50. Lunch and dinner: Mon-Sun. (There is also a branch in Chelsea, SW3).

Parsons
① 311 Fulham Road, SW10.
(071-352 0651).

A survivor from the early 1970s which has become a reliable standby for locals. The hamburgers are very good indeed and the clam chowder is worthy of a "serious" restaurant. The much imitated decor is all white paint, potted palms and Victorian garden furniture. Good cheap wines and some unusual beers. £35. Lunch and dinner every day.

Dundas Park
⑤ On A52, two miles south of Inverness (0463 230512).

The atmosphere is that of a guest house that has come up in the world. The place is rather homely, the cooking is not — it attempts more than it can deliver and seems reluctant to keep things simple. When the sound ingredients are not mocked around, the results are pleasing. Excellent wines, good views of the River Ness and the Caledonian Canal. £50-60. Dinner every day (bookings needed).

The Old Monastery
③ Drybridge, Buckie, Banffshire
(0542 32660).

More a re-building than a conversion, this spacious and handsome establishment looks down across Picland to the Moray Firth. The cooking tends towards provincial over-elaboration, but is on target with the simpler dishes. The wine list is pretty good, the all-female service is charming though tending towards the nippy kind of business. £60. Lunch and dinner Tues-Sat.

The Hand Rock Cafe
② 16 High Street, Hampstead.
(NW3, 071-431 1959).

The phone number gets it right. This is a pastiche of anywhere in America in 1958 seen through the eyes of a video maker or ad director — chrome, plastic, Dion and Elvis. The burgers and milkshakes are all right but, no doubt, it is the feel rather than the food that is of moment. Ideal for 40-year-olds living their fantasy childhood. £20. (There are also branches in Old Compton Street, W1, King's Road, SW3, and Fulham Road.) Lunch and dinner Mon-Sun.

Ed's Easy Diner
② 16 High Street, Hampstead.

The phone number gets it right. This is a pastiche of anywhere in America in 1958 seen through the eyes of a video maker or ad director — chrome, plastic, Dion and Elvis. The burgers and milkshakes are all right but, no doubt, it is the feel rather than the food that is of moment. Ideal for 40-year-olds living their fantasy childhood. £20. (There are also branches in Old Compton Street, W1, King's Road, SW3, and Fulham Road.) Lunch and dinner every day.

Taillie Lodge
① Near Ballater, Grampian (03397 55400).

A touristic institution. As well as a restaurant it is a monument to the early 1970s taste for anything to do with the 1950s and 1960s. It is a museum of rock and roll memorabilia, which means lots of guitars and photos. The basic cooking is hard on the digestion though easy on the pocket, given the vast quantities that are dished up. Burgers are disappointing but chilli con carne and the steaks are all right. £45. All day every day.

Inverlochy Castle
⑤ Torlundy, Fort William, Highland Region (0397 702177).

An extraordinary Victorian dive capsule which tries to be more country house than hotel (opening March 2 after winter break). The service is quite something — a uniformed platoon green diners who, inevitably, have difficulty negotiating the massed ranks. The interior of the muscular-baronial pile is impressive — hectares of paneling, hundreds of dead stag heads.

KIND FOOD: ALISON JOHNSON

EC with egg on its face

Last summer, Asda trumpeted the fact that it was selling 15 per cent free-range, 60 per cent barn and only 25 per cent battery eggs. Three moderate cheers — but couldn't we reduce the last figure?

You may wonder what a barn egg is. To find out, I visited one of the "perchery" units that supplies Asda eggs. Though the birds live indoors, they have access to tiered perches, nest boxes and litter.

This unit was partitioned into sub-flocks of 1,000 birds to discourage aggression, with "only" 16 birds per square metre of floor space. Even so, they were ranged like crowds in a football stadium.

Do they become equally blood-thirsty? Unfortunately, yes. To discourage savagery, most perchery flocks are de-beaked, an operation now proved to cause long-lasting distress. They have litter provided, but not until well into lay, so that pullets learn to use the nest boxes rather than lay unprofitably dirty eggs in the litter.

This is a long way from an ideal situation, but it has to be said that it is preferable to a battery cage, which could not be worse for the naturally bustling hen.

At present it is impossible to tell whether eggs from "altern-

ative" or "colony" systems (free range, deep litter and barn/perchery) come from good or bad farms, even though these systems are inherently "kinder" than cages.

Unlike the situation for poultry, the term "free range" when applied to eggs is an EC statutory marketing term, and therefore not regulated primarily on welfare grounds, as shoppers might think. However, this may change.

Concerned to align marketing with welfare terms when the EC Directive on laying hens is reviewed later this year, the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) recently submitted its report on colony systems to the government. Its main recommendations are for no more than seven hens per square metre of floor space, or around 15.5 (i) with tiered perches.

The FAWC has also recommended friable litter for scratching and dust-bathing, a ban on routine beak trimming by 1996, and "sufficient" porches in free-range systems to allow all hens to roost.

Nothing too extreme here. But is there enough about what hens need? By the time the usual degree of compromise has entered into European discussions, will the poor old hen be any better off?

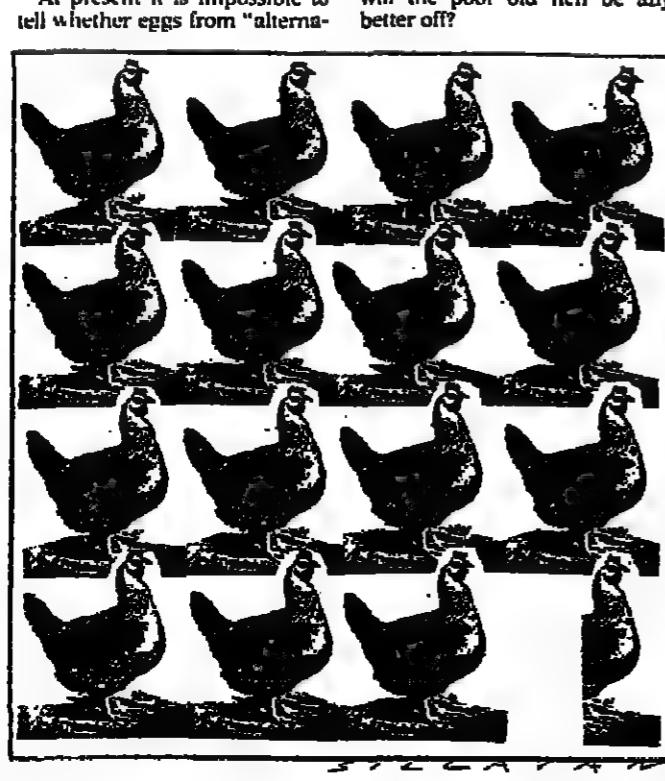
My recipe for eggless chocolate cake was popular, so here is a similar one for gingerbread. It is excellent when served hot with Greek yoghurt or ice-cream, especially if you stir some sherry over it. It improves by being kept for a week, hence the name.

Week ginger

224g self-raising flour
2tsp cinnamon
4tsp ground ginger
112g margarine
224g treacle
56g muscovado sugar
125ml milk
2tsp bicarbonate of soda

Preheat oven to 150C, line tin 21cm square. Sieve first three ingredients. Heat everything else except soda until steaming. Beat in soda — batter will foam. Immediately fold in flour mixture, bake approximately 70 minutes.

Report on the Welfare of Laying Hens in Colony Systems from FAWC (081-330 8032). Ask for the Minority Report as well.



Play tick the toques

JEAN PIERRE REY

The French may not win many Olympic medals this week, but 50 top chefs will be going for gold in the Albertville big top

W

hatever their fate on the slippery slopes, the French have got it thoroughly together as far as bread and circuses are concerned. For the duration of the Winter Olympics the best chefs in France are cooking in a big top.

The circus tent has been raised next to the town hall in Albertville. It is billed as *Le Restaurant le plus Togué du Monde*.

A *toque* is a chef's hat, and the symbol of culinary excellence chosen by the *Guide Gault-Millau* to rival Michelin's rosettes. In idiomatic French, though, *toqué* also means crazy, which is a fair description for any restaurant which in 13 gala nights deploys the skills of 50 chefs mustering between them a total of no fewer than 103 Michelin stars.

This Olympiad of gastronomic endeavour has been conceived and co-ordinated by Marc Veyrat, a brilliant young chef whose magnificent restaurant at the Auberge de l'Eridan in Veyrières-du-Lac, just outside Annecy, is regarded as a prime candidate for promotion to three-star status when the *Michelin Guide* delivers its verdict for 1992. He has already been nominated chef of the year by the *Guide Gault-Millau* and is one of the 15 chefs to whom they award their highest mark to date: 19.5 out of 20.

M. Veyrat is in the Albertville marquee each night, co-operating with an ever-changing, all-star brigade of chefs from the different regions of France, taking turns to present their regional specialities in a succession of menus surprises.

For the gala of gluttony M. Veyrat has recruited another six chefs who, like him, qualify for 19.5 ratings from *Gault-Millau*. They include Gérard Boyer from Reims and Jean Barde from Tours. *Gault-Millau*'s joint chefs of the year for 1992, who cooked together last Monday, presenting regional specialities of the Loire and Champagne.

Michel Trama from L'Auberge de Puymirail will be among the équipe representing the southwest this Tuesday, and on Wednesday both Georges Blanc of La Mère Blanc at Vonnas and Marc



Cooking up a storm: the culinary all-star doyen, Paul Bocuse

Meneau of L'Espérance at Saigne-Pére-sous-Vézelay will be stoking the stoves as representatives of Burgundy. On Thursday it is the turn of Jean-Pierre Haebelin from L'Auberge de l'Ill at Illhaeusern in Alsace.

To avoid such calamities, each chef is responsible for the preparation of one course. Up to 150 customers all take their places at 8.30pm prompt. The service, running the chicane imposed by having parties seated at separate tables, is in the capable hands of 15 waiters from the two-star: 19-out-of-20 Gray d'Albion restaurant run by Jacques Chibois at the Royal Gray hotel in Cannes. The Gray d'Albion is taking its annual holiday to coincide with the Winter Olympics.

Among the other three-star chefs on parade are Roger Vergé of Le Moulin de Mougins, the Pits from Valence, Emile Jung from Le Crocodile in Strasbourg, and the doyen of French grand event cooking, Paul Bocuse.

If you believe everything you hear about inter-kitchen rivalries,

Get Crisp bit of rough Knobbly celeriac is worth getting to know

CELERIAC is one of my favourite winter vegetables. It might look like a simple country bumpkin next to the cool and elegant fennel, the cosmopolitan green beans and mange tout, and the dandyish radicchio, but it is worth getting below that rough, tough, knobbly exterior to the dense, crisp, white flesh beneath, with a pronounced flavour of celery, its relative.

This large root vegetable is heavy, weighing at least a pound, and needs peeling before cooking. Because the white flesh oxidises rapidly on contact with air, it is best to quarter the root and rub the cut surfaces with lemon. Then peel each quarter and drop into a saucepan of water, to which you have added a little more lemon juice or vinegar.

At this time of year celeriac is a marvellous partner to dark game such as hare and venison. I dice it small and add to game soups and consommés. Larger chunks are cooked in game pies and casseroles. One of the best ways of using celeriac is to boil it with potatoes and plenty of peeled garlic cloves, then drain and mash with olive oil.

Celeriac can be used like potatoes in other ways: chips and crisps are particularly good, the crisps making a perfect canapé for a sliver of marinated salmon.

Fresh shellfish combines very well with the celeriac's earthy sweetness. I like to blanch strips of celeriac, then cut it into thin julienne strips before combining with freshly cooked mussels and a creamy mustard dressing. Celeriac on its own in such a dressing is the "celeri-rave" of the traditional French hors d'oeuvres trolley.

Although ideally suited to our climate, celeriac has featured very little in traditional English cooking. Perhaps it will fare better in the modern kitchen. Arabella Boxer, in *A Visible Feast*, has a very good recipe for poached egg on a bed of celeriac purée topped with a sauce and finished under the grill. Peter Kromberg at the International in London uses celeriac for "lasagne", taking very thin broad slices of celeriac, blanching them, and then layering them with filling. Try a prawn, mussel or scallop lasagne with celeriac.

FRANCES BISSELL

ROBIN YOUNG

</

Fruitful kitchen endeavours

The last thing readers of *The Times* want is a cookery column about marmalade. It has taken me a few years to come to this conclusion, even though it is the subject which generates by far the most correspondence, all of it written by experts. Who would have thought there were so many ways of making this preserve? Clearly no further guidance is required.

However, the new season's oranges from Seville and Valencia will not be ignored. Nor will the bowl of Sicilian citrons and lemons I brought back from a recent visit to Italy. I also returned with some wonderful recipes and have included some of them today, together with some fresh, citrusy, sorbets and that wartime favourite, lemon curd (yes, it does use raw eggs, and yes, the ministry guidelines on their consumption still apply; if in doubt about using them, don't).

Freshly made pasta is better for the first recipe than dried pasta, as the sauce is light in texture and the flavour very delicate. Franco Verucci, *sous chef* at the Cavalieri Hilton in Rome, cooked it for us and Emilio Liciardi, the *maître d'hôtel*, described in detail how to prepare it. Signor Verucci used tagliolini. Spaghettini, or angel hair, can also be used. As with all pasta dishes, it is important to have the serving plates very hot.

Tagliolini al limone
(pasta with lemon sauce)
(serves 4)

1lb/455g fresh or dried pasta
2 large lemons with good skins
2oz/60g unsalted butter
3-4oz/85-110ml single, double or whipping cream
white pepper

Peel off the zest of one lemon, put it in a frying pan with the butter and set over a low heat. Let it infuse for five to ten minutes, without the butter burning. Remove the zest. Add the cream, grate in the zest of the second lemon and let this cook until you have a well-flavoured cream. Season with white pepper. Cook the pasta as appropriate, drain it, but not too thoroughly, and mix with the sauce. Stir in the lemon juice to taste (probably the juice of at least one lemon) and serve immediately. This is a rich, creamy dish, despite the image of something tangy and astringent created by its name. If your pasta is particularly absorbent, you may



Oranges and lemons give dishes fresh zest says
Frances Bissell,
The Times cook

well need to stir in more like 4pt/140ml of cream. Above all, the pasta should not be sticky in the sauce.

The next recipe can be adapted to most fish fillets; those from plaice, sole, brill and turbot, will generally cook more quickly than those taken from round fish. It is based on *soglia al arancia*, which was on the New Year's day menu at Ristorante Fini in Modena. I have cooked several versions at home, pan-frying pieces taken from a large fresh cod fillet and letting them cook in their own juices after brushing them with orange juice and olive oil.

I have cooked fillets of red mullet in the oven in parchment parcels, having first brushed them with walnut oil, then squeezed on a little Seville orange juice and finally grating on the zest of the bitter orange. This was not an entirely good idea. It is tempting to use the nut oils in this way, but the oven heat was high enough to cause the oil, which has a low smoke point, to begin to deteriorate, bringing out a bitterness which, combined with the natural bitterness of Seville oranges, did nothing for the 1983 Chassagne Montrachet served with it. Fish is best cooked in the oven in olive oil or butter. Nut oils can be added as a seasoning after cooking.

The oranges I like best for this recipe are navel oranges and the blood oranges. If you can get limes with good skins, try using them instead. If I can get it, red mullet is my favourite fish for this recipe, provided it is big enough. One weighing 1lb, or just over, will feed two. Have it scaled and filleted. Use the head and bones for a stock, made by simmering in 1pt/570ml water for 20-25 minutes, with a bay leaf, a celery stalk top and, if you have it, a slice of fresh ginger. Strain through a very fine sieve and reduce to 4pt/140ml. Store, or freeze, half of it for another time.

Grapefruit and mint sorbet: As above, pounding fresh mint leaves into some of the icing sugar before mixing into the liquid.

Variations:

Blood orange sorbet: Freshly squeezed blood oranges, a teaspoon or two of orange flower water, sweetened to taste.

Lemon and thyme sorbet: Freshly squeezed, lemon juice, lemon thyme, spring water and icing sugar to taste. Take a teaspoon of fresh lemon thyme leaves, pound them in a mortar with a little of the sugar and stir into the juice before mixing with spring water and the rest of the sugar and freezing it.

Grapefruit and mint sorbet: As above, pounding fresh mint leaves

Pesce al arancia
(fish with orange sauce)
(serves 2)

2 red mullet fillets
2-3tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 navel orange
sea salt
freshly ground black pepper
4pt/140ml fish stock

Make sure there are no scales sticking to the skin and remove any larger bones that might come out easily. Brush the fillets on both sides with olive oil. Peel off two or three broad stripes of zest and grate the rest over the fish. Squeeze on some of the juice. Season it lightly and leave it while you cut the zest into long, thin curls. Simmer them in the stock. Heat a well-seasoned or non-stick frying-pan over a moderate heat and place the fish fillets, skin-side down, in the pan. Cover with a lid, and "sweat" the fish for about eight minutes, depending on the thickness. Transfer the fish to warm plates and put the curls of orange zest on it. Pour the stock into the frying-pan, add a little more orange juice and boil until reduced to a few tablespoons. Whisk in the remaining olive oil, bring to the boil and serve the sauce with the fish.

Orange sorbet
(serves 6)

juice of half a lemon
1pt/570ml freshly squeezed orange juice
icing sugar to taste (see note below)

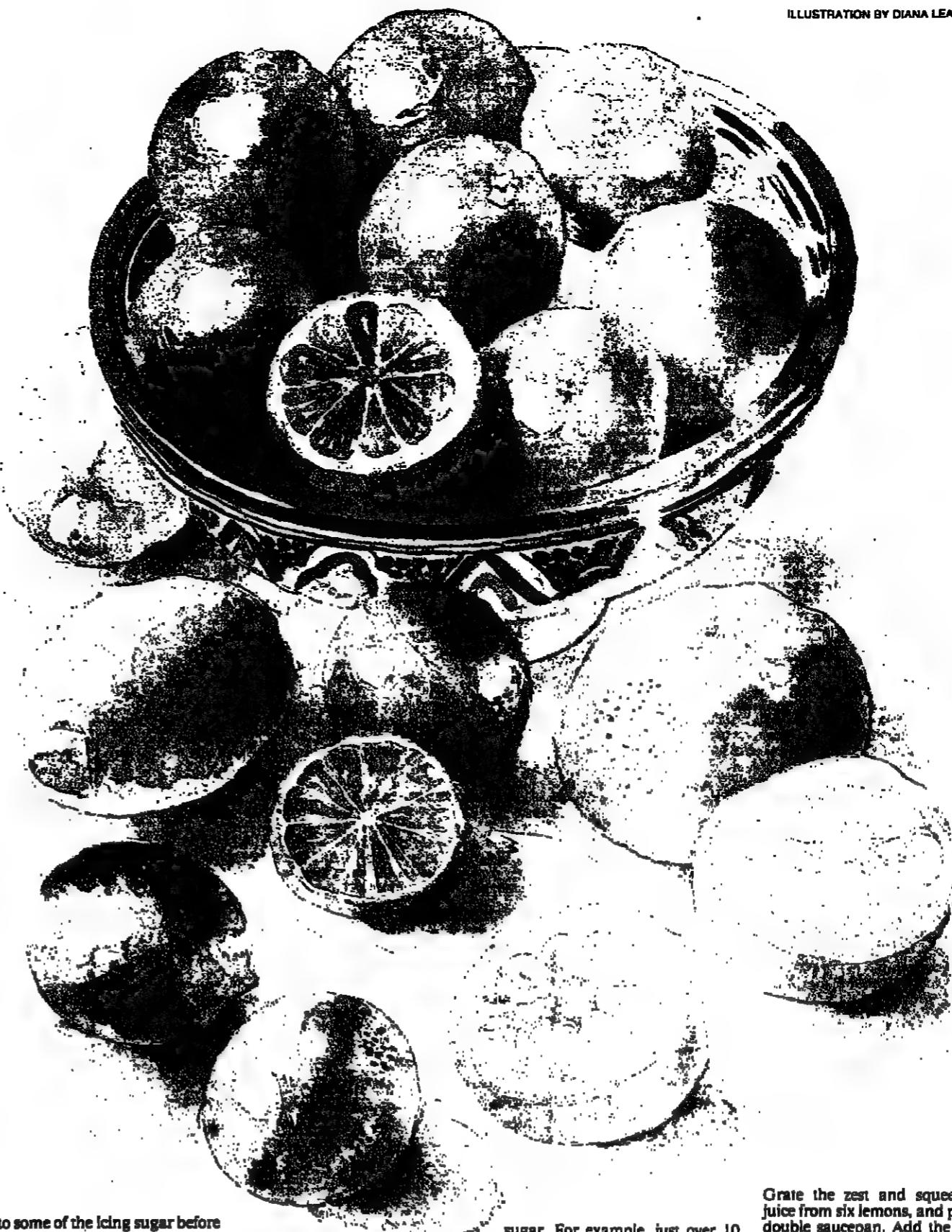
Mix all the ingredients, stirring until the icing sugar has dissolved. Freeze in a sorbetiere or ice-cream maker, according to the manufacturer's instructions. The mixture can also be frozen in a freezer container and should be stirred from time to time as it is freezing to keep as even a texture as possible.

Variations:

Blood orange sorbet: Freshly squeezed blood oranges, a teaspoon or two of orange flower water, sweetened to taste.

Lemon and thyme sorbet: Freshly squeezed, lemon juice, lemon thyme, spring water and icing sugar to taste. Take a teaspoon of fresh lemon thyme leaves, pound them in a mortar with a little of the sugar and stir into the juice before mixing with spring water and the rest of the sugar and freezing it.

Grapefruit and mint sorbet: As above, pounding fresh mint leaves



into some of the icing sugar before mixing into the liquid.

Notes on sorbet-making:

Mixing half juice and half champagne or sparkling wine creates a very good sorbet. Some spirits and liqueurs go very well with sorbets, including vodka or gin with the grapefruit and lemon sorbets. I also like Nolly Prat with these two and a spot of Campari in orange sorbets, but too much alcohol will prevent

the mixture from freezing, of course. Too much sugar will also cause the sorbet not to freeze well; too little, and it will freeze to a grainy textured granite. A proportion of one part sugar to two parts other ingredients is about right. However, different fruits and fruit juices contain different amounts of

sugar. For example, just over 10 percent of freshly squeezed orange juice is sugar.

Lemon curd

(This recipe uses uncooked eggs)

4 large lemons with good skins
8 egg yolks, or 4 whole eggs
5oz/140g unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
12oz/340g caster sugar

Grate the zest and squeeze the juice from six lemons, and put in a double saucepan. Add the lightly beaten eggs, butter and sugar. Stir until the sugar has dissolved. Continue cooking and stir until the mixture thickens. Pot in small, clean, dry jars, which you have warmed in the oven. Cover immediately. Label, refrigerate and use within three to four weeks.

Seville oranges can also be used to make a very well-flavoured curd.

• Next week: More food from Italy.

Crisp
bit of
rough

Getting plastered on corn

Jane MacQuitty unravels the ancient secrets of frontier craft that founded America's whiskey industry

barley, sometimes wheat, produced a spirit superior to rye. Craig is also said to have discovered that ageing the clear spirit in new, white oak barrels — charred on the inside with a layer of caramelised wood — pro-

duced a finer spirit still. Like all great spirit regions, Kentucky was graced with the natural resource of soft, pure spring water filtered through a bed of limestone rock.

Today straight, or unadulterated bourbon is aged for a

minimum of two years in airy rack houses. The barrels expand and contract with the temperature, which forces the spirit in and out of the barrel's caramelised layer of charred wood, allowing it to soften and pick up colour and flavour.

Unlike whisky matured in used casks, bourbon matured in new wood cannot be aged for much longer than eight years, otherwise an excessively woody spirit would result.

Bourbon also differs from whisky in that it is distilled in tall continuous stills to a lower alcoholic strength than scotch whisky, giving it a more robust, earthy flavour. Its other, highly individual whiskey attribute is that each fermenting batch of sour mash is seeded with the same strain of yeast as a previous batch, which ensures continuity of style and flavour.

Tennessee whiskey is made in exactly the same way as bourbon, but the raw spirit is also filtered very slowly through a deep layer of sugar maple charcoal before it is aged in charred barrels.

Bourbon experts are divided as to how great a difference this makes to the end result, but corn is a particularly sweet-tasting grain, and the only two brands of Tennessee whiskey available, Jack Daniel's and George Dickel, do seem to taste drier and less heavily flavoured as a result.

Bourbon, at first, is a shock and best drunk neat in a small glass, as the Americans do. This is a big, assertive, full-flavoured spirit reeking of vanilla, oak, caramel and a fruity sweetness that stems from the corn and the charring. It is a pungent, not a polished, spirit like scotch, and is at its best, I feel, drunk and not sipped.

Cutting bourbon 50-50 with a good, still bottled water such as Evian aids appreciation, which is an acquired, not an immediate art.

Jack Daniel's Tennessee whiskey is the biggest-selling bourbon-style brand in the UK, followed by Jim Beam bourbon. Together they comprise 90 per cent of the market. But given that they cost £15 plus, I would trade straight up to one of the superior bottles listed left.



Two fingers: a double measure of bourbon on the rocks

TOP TIMES BOURBONS

• Maker's Mark Tesco £18.95, Oddbins £18.99, Selfridges £19.59

Made by the Samuels at their small, family-run distillery in the heart of Kentucky, Maker's Mark is the priciest brand available here and the one with the most prestige. What separates this bourbon from the rest is the softness and smoothness of its rich oak, vanilla and raisin-like caramel flavours. A bourbon star.

• George Dickel Oddbins £15.99

Drier and woodier in style than the above, as Tennessee whiskeys often are, and blessed with a pleasant, fruity taste.

• No.1 Bourbon Street Bourbon Oddbins £14.99

Bourbon Street's earthy pungency is lightened by lots of fine, gingery spice and vanilla flavours.

• Wild Turkey 101 Oddbins and Tesco £17.29, Asda £17.49

At 50.5 per cent proof, instead of 40 like other bourbons, Wild Turkey's superior, eight-year-old version boasts an unusual, earthy, wet leaves-like flavour. Distinctive.

• Four Roses Bourbon Oddbins £11.99

A good, value-for-money, introductory bourbon whose sweet, simple vanilla flavours are easy to enjoy.

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THE GOVERNMENT AUCTION HANDBOOK

Ever wondered what happens to the stock and assets of a company when declared bankrupt? Ever considered where the property and possessions seized by HM Customs and Excise are sold? Ever questioned what the Official Receiver, Liquidators, Bailiffs, and the Collector of Taxes do with the goods they sequestered?

They're all sold off at auction to the highest bidder. But these auctions are unlike any other you may have been to or heard about - THERE ARE NO RESERVE PRICES. The goods offered at government appointed auctions have to be sold there and then for whatever they will fetch. The departments which run them - Customs, Receivers, Trustees, Police, Secret Services, Executors, Transport, Lost Property departments, etc - are only interested in liquidating those goods quickly.

Most items realise no more than 10% of their market value. In general, they're snapped up by eager buyers who make a fortune by reselling this stock to the general public - YOU is in their interest to keep the whole procedure as quiet as possibly possible. This has been the case for many years, but now it's your turn to get in on the act.

You will find an amazing variety of items from boats to planes to automobiles... from office equipment to kitchenware... from household furniture to game supplies... from jewellery to video cameras... from television to jet-skis... from toolkits to joke boxes... from clothes to fine art. And all at knockdown prices. Just take a look at the examples below, noted at recent auctions, all either brand new or in first class condition.

	Retail Price £	Auction Price £
Range Rover, 1984, B Reg	6500	2400
Xerox Fax Machine (as new)	650	75
Amstrad PC Computer	450	55
Canon Photocopier	750	22
Garden Shed (boxed, new)	550	12
Panasonic Phone & Answer-machine	170	17
Fujifilm 35mm Camera	250	65
Yamaha LC 125 Motorcycle (2300 miles)	950	135
Rotary Gold Watch	75	50
Holiday Washing Machine (new)	550	35
Case of 12 Glenfiddich Whisky	100	40
Alai Mid Hi-Fi System (boxed)	670	18
Electric Typewriter	650	21
Microwave oven	215	21
Microscope 1000 power	300	6
200 Computer Games	1000	20
Electric Cornflakes maker	190	10
Double pedestal desk	150	7
Complete video Juke Box System	2500	80
Photographic Light Boxes	900	30

Government auctions are held at many and various locations nationwide - in England, Scotland, N. Ireland and Wales, approximately every two weeks. They're inexpensive. And the only reason you may not have heard about them is simply because they are not widely publicised. But, contrary to popular belief, these auctions are NOT a closed shop exclusively reserved for traders - anyone is allowed to attend them. However, you do need to know where to look as well as what to do.

The Government Auction Handbook provides you with not only a comprehensive list of auctions throughout the country, but also their sale

days and times... which departments liquidate through them... how to obtain specialised catalogues... and what to expect to find. The handbook includes advice on auction procedure, the types of auction you will encounter, what to avoid, tips on bidding and how to assure yourself the lowest possible price, the tricks and plays involved, methods of payment and the sort of bargains you can expect to find.

Also included with your handbook are instructions on how to go about setting yourself up as a dealer, simply and easily. But this is not one of those books professing to tell you how to get rich quick. It's primarily designed to save you money, lots of money, though you can see, the information it contains for financial gain, if you should so desire, as this reader found out:

I have personally purchased the entire stock of a bankrupt oil license and sold it the very same day for seven times the price! A friend of mine bought a dismantled 3-type Jaguar (used for smuggling drugs and confiscated by Customs) for £750, a car which he later sold for £20,000!
P.J., Milton Keynes

The Government Auction Handbook costs no more than the average popular hardback. As one reader in Norfolk puts it in a recent letter to us: "Your book was the best £12 I have ever spent". And another reader, this time in Yorkshire, who to say the least, has made enough profit from ONE sale to pay for the Handbook 90 times over!

You can, of course, simply continue to buy your home, leisure and work goods through the normal channels and pay through checked bills for them. But if you're the kind of person who would like a brand new Sony CD/HIFI for fifteen quid, an IBM computer system for as little as a tenner, a speedboat with a horse power outboard for less than the cost of the coat you're ready should send off for THE Government Auction Handbook immediately. Just complete and return the form below:

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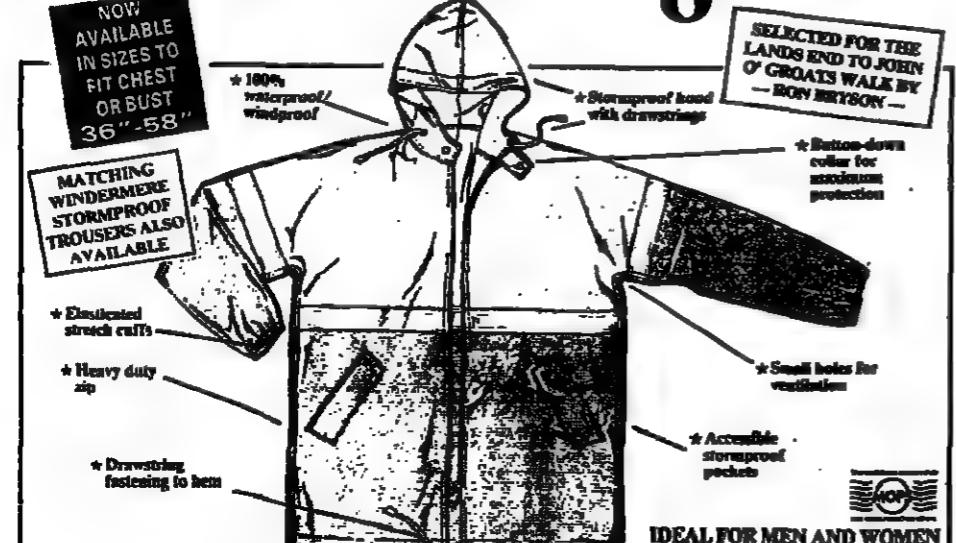
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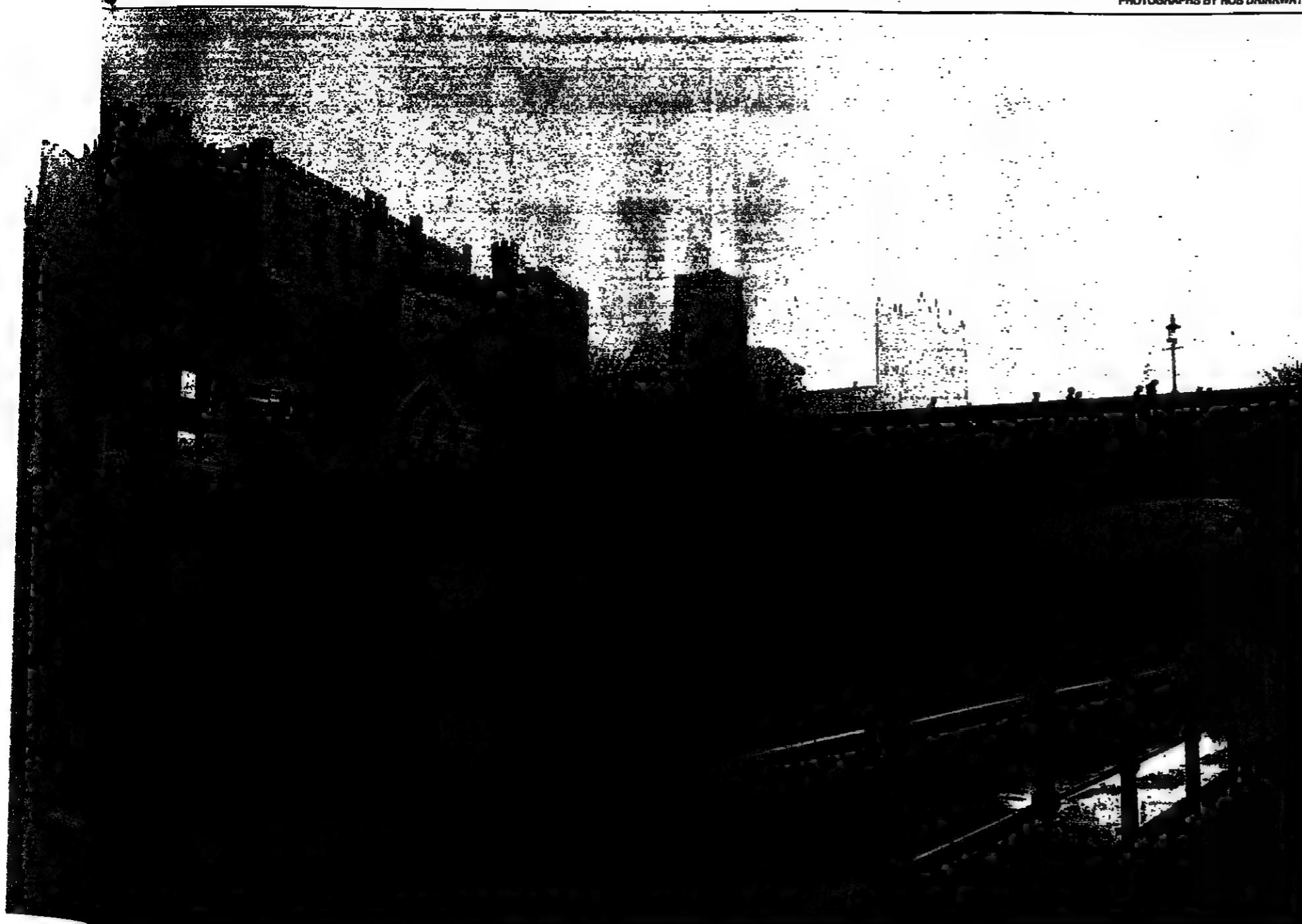
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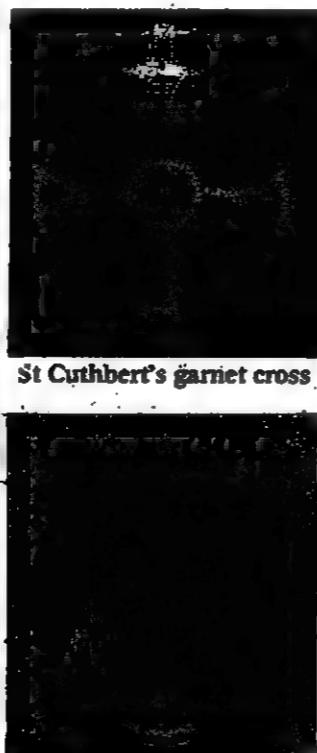
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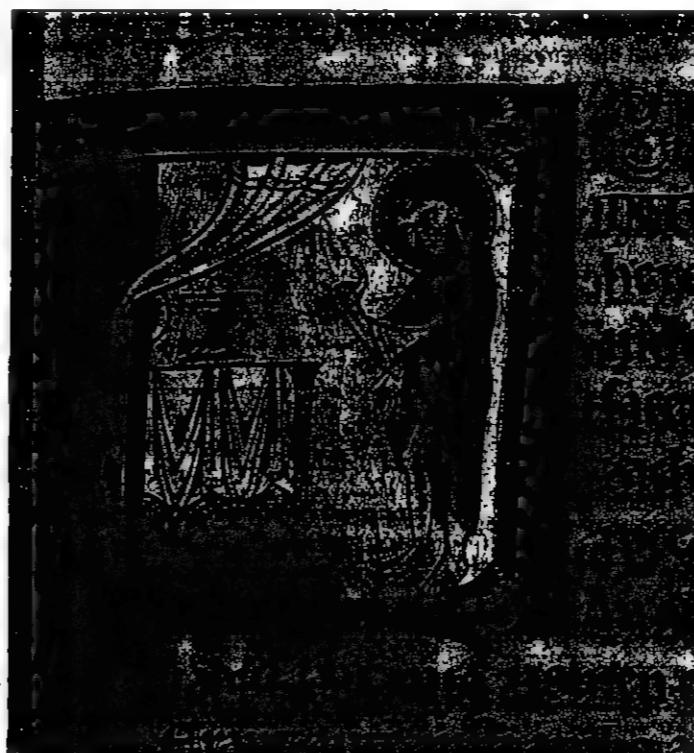
Urising behind Framwell Gate bridge, the last great shrine to a Saxon saint, and a miracle of the Gothic engineering which holds up all subsequent medieval cathedrals



ing the market. Durham's medieval street plan is intact, but not its architecture



St Cuthbert's garnet cross



Golden prose: fragment from a 12th-century illuminated Bible

one hopes, turning it into some gimmicky period-piece stage set. The present-day cathedral authorities acknowledge that, as the 20th century cannot match the genius of the original builders, its best contribution is to light their work properly.

Down in the dim light of the Treasury beneath the monks' dormitory, Durham displays some of its dazzling artefacts. But the glittering richness of the cathedral plate pales beside the early gold and leather-bound Bibles, their parchment pages alive with the endless years of monastic labour that produced the Celtic beauty of illuminated gospels.

Here, too, is Cuthbert's 7th-century gold and garnet pectoral cross, splendid gold-embroidered manacles from his tomb, and the oaken remains of his much-disturbed coffin.

Cuthbert's great draw as a

saint was that every time the monks lifted the lid to gaze upon his earthly remains, they miraculously stayed in a perfect state of preservation: they even cut his fingernails regularly with a pair of silver scissors. He was interred in 1104, as he was being moved to his final rest in the new cathedral, and despite being well over 400 years old he still looked in good condition.

When a group of sceptical academics and clerics, unable to contain their curiosity at the legend any longer, opened the tomb in 1827 they found to their dismay, but not entirely to their surprise, that Cuthbert had finally become a pile of bones.

While Cuthbert has decayed, his mighty shrine still stands after more than 30 generations. That the stones breathe such age as no living being may aspire to is a powerful element in its appeal.

Below the cathedral, Durham

city retains its winding, hilly, medieval street plan, but little of its medieval domestic architecture. It is a tightly-built place, described by Defoe as "a little compact neatly contriv'd city".

There will be much celebration of Durham's 900th next year, although the dean and chapter are anxious to present their cathedral as a living thing and not an ancient relic. But I can think of no greater draw than that they borrow back the Lindisfarne Gospels, as they did several years ago, from the British Library, and mount another display of that exquisite Celtic art that even the conquering Normans found too beautiful to destroy.

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Below the cathedral, Durham

Take your own soap and shower cap

ERIC BEAUMONT



What would happen if a hotel promised all the really important elements of a good hotel, but without so much flannel and flummery and with lower tariffs? "Bring your own soap and shower cap" might be its slogan.

Here is another idea in keeping with the times which I came across recently at Frankfurt's swankiest hotel, the Steigenberger Frankfurter Hof: "Dear Hotel Guest," ran the note in my bathroom, "Can you imagine how many tons of towels are unnecessarily washed every day in all the hotels all over the world, and the monstrous amount of washing powder needed which thereby pollutes our water? Please decide: Hand-towel thrown into the bath or shower means 'Please exchange'. Hand-towel replaced on the towel-rail means 'I'll use it again'. For the sake of our environment."

HILARY RUBINSTEIN
Editor of *The Good Hotel Guide*
(Macmillan, £13.99)

Hotels

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROS DRINKWATER

★ WHERE TO STAY ★



Cromwell was (possibly) here: inside the Royal County Hotel

Carved from a row of Jacobean town houses, and now much extended, the Royal County Hotel is the place to stay in Durham. Five minutes steeply downhill from the cathedral, it commands excellent views of Old Durham from its elevated position. Charles I and Cromwell may have stayed here; Edward VII certainly did, his visit earning the royal prefix. Four-star, very central and elegantly comfortable, the hotel still retains its historic oak staircase brought from Loch Leven castle, where Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned. Much more recent is the hotel's leisure club. Much the best hotel in the area, the Royal County offers weekend breaks from £85 per person for two nights' dinner, bed and breakfast (091-386 6821).

Very central, but slightly more functional, is the Three Tuns Hotel, owned like the Royal County by Vaux, the Sunderland brewery group. This former 16th-century

coach house offers weekend breaks on a par with its grander sister round the corner (091-386 4326).

Something of a curiosity is Lumley Castle, six miles north of Durham near Chester-le-Street. A 14th-century pile with an extraordinary interior stuffed with an eclectic collection of antiques and bric-a-brac, reminiscent of an Arabian bazaar. Single rooms from £55, but special breaks available (091-389 1111).

Very central, but cheaper, is the Georgian Town House in Crossgate, a tall terrace building in a cobbled street close to the cathedral. Proprietor Janet Weil gives it a personal touch, with pretty patterned wallpaper and fabrics, and plenty of flowers. B&B from about £35 (091-386 6870).

Budget travellers are recommended to Mrs Williams's Castle View Guest House, an 18th-century listed building in Crossgate, with B&B from about £20 (091-386 8852).

WHERE TO EAT

• Durham is a university city, well served by cheap and cheerful Italian restaurants, of which there are at least nine, an Indian and a new but woefully disappointing Chinese. Memorable eating experiences are thin on the ground outside hotel dining rooms, of which the Royal County is much the best, offering a very acceptable four-course dinner (full vegetarian menu if desired) in the County restaurant from £18.25. Good wine list and brisk, attentive service in commendable comfort. The adjoining Bowes Brasserie is open all day for more informal eating.

• Three miles from the city in the village of Pitington, to-

wards Sunderland, is Hallgarth Manor, a converted small manor house more smart than chinny, with a restaurant leaning towards nouvelle cuisine and mildly exotic dishes but, according to local opinion, with reasonably substantial portions.

• City centre restaurants patronised by the student population include the And Alber (offshoot of a pub named the Victoria, ho ho) in Hallgarth Street, and Rafters in Claypath. Both reasonably priced, but neither likely to star in the foodie guides. Coffee, Danish pastries or light lunch in the cathedral cafeteria are welcome relief from foot-slogging and neck-crunching at architectural glories.

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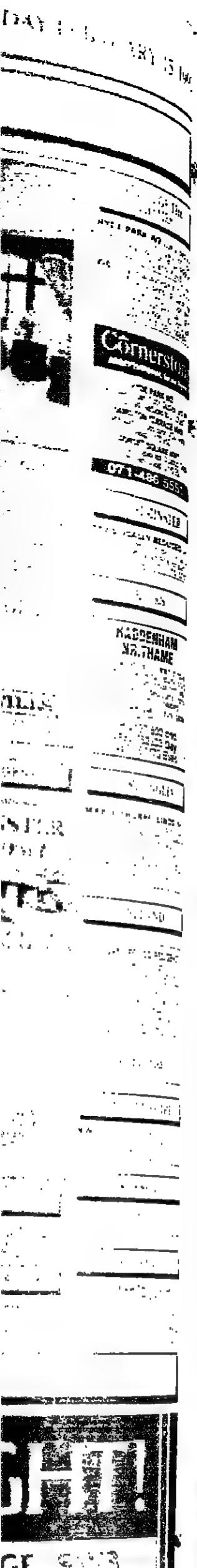
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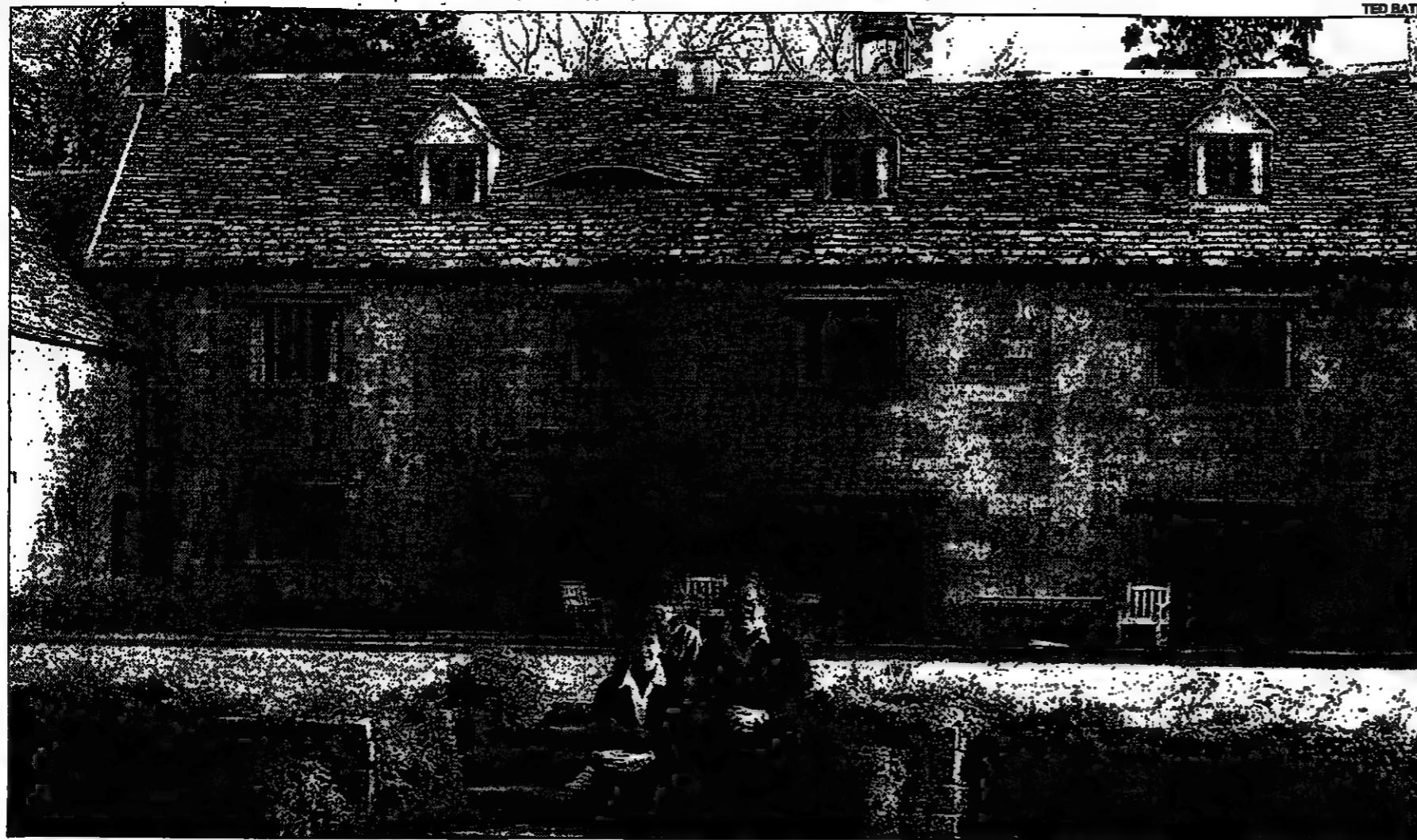
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SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15 1992

PROPERTY

13



Change of pace: Anthony and Rosie Cheetham and 18-year-old Flavia at their Gloucestershire retreat. The relaxed life-style helped Flavia to speak for the first time

To the manor fled

Home from home: Anthony and Rosie Cheetham

Publishers Anthony and Rosie Cheetham's ten-year-old daughter, Emma, always longed for a house with two staircases and "a big muddy garden". She got both when her parents bought their weekend home in Gloucestershire two years ago.

In fact, the rambling manor house has four staircases and the garden is about six acres of wilderness.

For Mr Cheetham, who spent a displaced childhood moving around the world with his parents — his father, Sir Nicolas Cheetham, was a diplomat — their weekend retreat is a place where he feels he can put down roots.

"I always wanted somewhere on the edge of a village, near enough to walk to the pub," he says. He fled to Gloucestershire after losing his job as chairman of the Random Century Group, the publishing giant, last October. "I was so used to thinking of it as a treat — one did one's work and then had two days in the country at the end.

On Friday nights, with Emma and her sister Rebecca, nine, they head for Gloucestershire. The manor stands in its own grounds, with stables, a little river, a ten-acre paddock for their four horses and another 90 acres that Mr Cheetham rents out to a local farmer to graze his sheep.

He has become a keen gardener.

of the week — and the idea of suddenly having limitless time there seemed immensely attractive."

The feeling lasted for about a week. By that time he and Mrs Cheetham had planned a new future. They have now bought publishers Weidenfeld & Nicolson, and set up Orion Books.

Mr Cheetham, 48, is currently sharing the southwest London office of Lord Weidenfeld, who has continued as chairman, while Mrs Cheetham works from their six-bedroom house in southeast London.

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Despite the number of rooms, he describes it as an intimate

"We've chopped down the endless eiders and brambles and added two fields to what had been the garden. We're turning it into an English garden — wild, with native plants. There is also what we rather grandly call the arboretum, which has about 60 trees."

The house, built of honey-coloured Cotswold stone, has about 25 smallish rooms, which means that the Cheethams can have weekend house parties for colleagues and friends.

Mr Cheetham says one of the best things about the house is that "if we have three or four people to stay, they are not crowded on top of each other. The house has an extraordinary ability to absorb people. You don't have that feeling everyone is roaring around."

Despite the number of rooms, he describes it as an intimate

house. It has also become a base for Mr Cheetham's three children by his first marriage — Nicolas, 20, Flavia, 18, and Oliver, 15. It has proved to be particularly therapeutic for Flavia, who is handicapped. "She absolutely loves it," her father says. Since living there, Flavia has started to talk for the first time.

"In the past two years more and more words have poured out," Mrs Cheetham says. "She feels secure there. Her bedroom overlooks the stables and she spends a lot of time with the horses. It seems to have liberated her."

The house is very much a community, with a full-time housekeeper, a woman who tends the horses, a twice-weekly cleaner and part-time gardeners.

For the first year the Cheethams shared the house with a team of workers, who converted an old barn into a 120m library with space for around 15,000 books.

So far it houses about 2,000, including Mrs Cheetham's collection of 19th-century children's writers, poetry, and her husband's books on the Middle Ages.

The library is equipped with telephones and a fax and serves as a part-time office. It was from there that the Cheethams planned their future after parting company with Random Century.

Mr Cheetham always takes work down at weekends. "I sometimes feel the week is for socialising and making telephone calls and the weekend is when the serious work gets done," he says.

Mr Cheetham has tried to create a tradition by which the whole family converge on their Gloucestershire house in August.

"Weekends seemed to go by in a flash in London. Now we get down to Gloucestershire on Friday evening full of plans about what we're going to do. It has made weekends seem like four days instead of two."

SALLY BROMPTON

Heap of the week: Eggesford House, Devon

Fateful marriage

Eggesford House is an eerie ruined shell, romantically set in beautiful countryside, telling a story of decline as tragic as any country house in Britain.

Built in 1822, the house was designed by Thomas Lee, the architect of Arlington Court in north Devon, which belongs to the National Trust. Lee won awards while a student at the Royal Academy but drowned when he was aged 40.

Early photographs of Eggesford show a rich example of Regency Tudor-Gothic, with interiors full of tracery doors, pendant ceilings, crested wainscoting and battlemented bookcases.

Records show that Lord Chichester "built a faire house" here in James I's reign, but this house was rebuilt by William Fellowes in the early 18th century, and was described as being of brick with grounds "laid out under the direction of Mr Richmond", the landscape gardener.

Lee or his client, the Hon. Newton Fellowes, chose a new site above the river Taw. The vast estate then passed by marriage to the Earl of Portsmouth, and the cause of Eggesford's demise was the all too common one of a family

making a choice between two country seats: the 6th earl preferred to live at Hursley Park in Hampshire, and Eggesford, with 3,277 acres, was sold in 1913 by Knight Frank and Rutley.

The particulars mentioned a magnificently timbered park of 300 acres, two miles of carriage drive, every variety of ornamental shrub, avenues of chestnut, a long gallery and

six state rooms, 30 bed and dressing rooms, stabling for 40 horses, and the curiosities of a "stamp room", apparently decorated with postage stamps.

A contemporary newspaper cutting records the most dreaded fate of all: "Sold for £85,000 a timber merchant, Mr Green of Chesterfield, the fifth large estate purchased by Mr Green in 12 months." Less than a year later, Eggesford was back on the market, divided into 83 lots.

A 1917 cutting in the local library at Chulmleigh records: "The house was stripped of its fittings and the roof removed. The park was cut up and many of the magnificent trees felled."

Two years later the newly formed Forestry Commission moved in, and its characteristic signature is all too visible today. Throughout Devon, it is said, there are numerous houses containing relics of poor Eggesford.

Now the ruined shell and 83 acres are for sale, though the guide price of £350,000 seems high for a house in this state. Mid-Devon district council has granted the owners, the Chambers family trust, planning permission to rebuild the main shell as an eight-bedroom house and to create three further houses in the ruined outbuildings.

Susan Teal, whose great-uncle bought the ruin in 1929, says: "The main walls are in a stable state, and from the clock tower there is the most breathtaking panorama of Devon countryside you can imagine."

MARCUS BINNEY

• Details from R. Thomas of Strutt and Parker (0392 215631).



Seeking a new romance: Eggesford House, priced at £350,000

Gaining a first in mortar

Before house prices pick up, first-time buyers can still have a field day

a variety of reasons — the death of the previous owner, for example, or an owner putting a formerly rented property on to the market to cut his losses — but invariably they will be costing the vendor a lot of money to maintain, and can be worth negotiating for. There may also be bargains in former commercial properties such as pubs and shops now coming on to the residential market. In Buxton, Derbyshire, the agent Frank Marshall is selling a shop with a maisonette above for £52,000. If planning permission is forthcoming from the local council — and many councils are tending to look favourably on properties being converted for residential use — this could result in a three-storey house worth nearly twice that.

Already installed in the same town are Christopher Head, aged 22, a travel agent, and Andrea Ainley, a safety co-ordinator with a construction company. They bought a Victorian, three-bedroom limestone terrace cottage for £39,950 last December. It had first gone on the market in April 1991 at £46,500. The vendors reduced the price when they found somewhere else to buy, and wanted a quick sale.

Mr Head and Ms Ainley had been looking at properties for a year and snapped it up when the

prices developers have acquired in part exchange for new houses, or in new houses themselves. "Builders have been prepared to lower prices by as much as 20 percent," Raymond Butterworth, of Edidsons in West Yorkshire, says. Many have also been offering incentives to new buyers, such as paying legal fees.

One type of property that has always represented a good deal is a dated and unmodernised house. They have always attracted first-time buyers who are prepared to put up with a little discomfort in return for a lot of property for their money.

Finally, there are repossessions. With more than 30,000 in 1991, and after a government and building society initiative that came too late to help many, repossessed houses and flats are selling well below their normal market value. Identifying them can sometimes be difficult. "You may need to be a bit of a detective," Adrian Snook, of Bridgfords in Northwich, Cheshire, says. "Obvious pointers are shiny new locks and an empty house."

The advantage of buying a repossessed property is that there is no vendor hanging on for the best offer. "Prices will vary according to the amount the building societies need to recover," says Shirley McGuire of the agent Barnard Marcus in Battersea, south London.

Best value of all, he says, are repossessed former council houses. "These properties give the most bricks and mortar for the least price," Mr Snook says. And it may mean getting an extra bedroom. Mr Snook recently sold a three-bedroom semi in poor condition for £38,500 in Middlewich. A Victorian terrace house in the same area with just two bedrooms costs £39,950. The drawback is that former council houses are unlikely to appreciate in value so quickly when the market eventually turns. "They will not be as saleable as a house of private origin," Mr Snook says.

"They tend to be surrounded by tenanted properties and there is still a stigma attached to them." Until confidence returns to the housing market and worries about the perceived threat of unemployment subside, home owners are still tending to move only when forced to, for job or family reasons. That means first-time buyers will remain ahead of the game. It is, as they say, an ill wind.

KAY MARLES

Grampian welcome: malt whisky distilleries, salmon fishing and wild scenery are within easy reach

Fish and whisky nips

HOUSE HUNTER
Garlandmore
Morayshire

ed another two bedrooms, making four altogether.

A new Victorian-style conservatory has been built on to the south gable of the house.

But the prospects for further expansion are limitless. Garland-

more was once a very well-to-do little farm, although the land has been sold off. The range of solid stone and slate steading (or barns) is in remarkably good condition, forming a protective snuggie of buildings within a few yards of the back door.

Roses and clematis proliferate outside. The car sheds are now garages and the cattle byre and stables retain the original cobbles and animal stalls.

The property is being sold by Brodies (15 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh, EH3 8HA, 031-228 4111) for offers of more than £105,000.

ALASTAIR ROBERTSON

A sports car ride from Le Mans



£22,000 for a small stone house

For just £22,000 (including agent's fees) you can buy this pretty terrace house (left) in a peaceful hamlet a few miles from the medieval town of Mayenne, in the region of the same name. The ferry port of St Malo is about 90 minutes' drive.

The old stone house has been fully renovated and is ready to move into. It has a kitchen and storage room on the ground floor, a living room, double bedroom and modernised bathroom upstairs, and another two bedrooms above. The price includes a large, secluded back garden with fruit trees and views over a wooded valley. (The UK agent is Normandy & Brittany Cottages, 62 Chesson Road, London W14, 071-381 4433.)

The Mayenne, the northernmost department of the Loire, is somewhat overshadowed by its better-known neighbours. Nor-

mandy and Brittany, and tends to be ignored by British holiday-makers and house-hunters travelling through it to the Dordogne and the Charente.

A peaceful farming region, gentle and rolling in parts, with winding country lanes, it is rather like Devon, with a lot less rain. The area is also famous for its rustic cuisine, with a good range of charcuterie, strong cheese and rich pork-based pâtés.

There is a good range of property in the area, from cot-

tages and farm buildings to manor houses and châteaux, with plenty around for under £25,000.

It is well-placed for excursions into the Loire valley and to the beaches of Normandy and Brittany. Le Mans, the mecca of motor racing, is practically on the doorstep.

There are a number of historic towns in the Mayenne, including Laval and medieval Ste Suzanne, a fortified town on a hill. Houses in the area are mainly built of stone and have steeply sloping slate roofs, arched doorways, enormous oak beams and huge open fireplaces.

Properties here are generally less expensive than in Normandy and Brittany, but will often need modernising. You can still find an old *fermette* (farm cottage) to restore with mains water and electricity and half an acre of land for under £10,000. But you

will need to spend at least £25,000 for anything that is habitable.

A large farmhouse in good condition with three or four bedrooms, numerous outbuildings and up to 15 acres of agricultural land will set you back at least £30,000.

Village houses, usually with two bedrooms and room for expansion in the loft, offer the best value. These are often on mains drainage. Prices start at £15,000 for a small terrace house in need of some modernisation, but with all services intact.

Alternatively, there are *maisons bourgeoises* — rather grand, classically proportioned mansions generally located at the edge of a village. Many come with an acre or two of land and can be picked up for as little as £50,000.

CHERYL TAYLOR

Buyers' France

THE MAYENNE

mandy and Brittany, and tends to be ignored by British holiday-makers and house-hunters travelling through it to the Dordogne and the Charente.

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There is a good range of property in the area, from cot-

Fairy stories at bedtime

Kay Marles meets a furniture maker whose designs for children come from the heart, not the head

Brighly painted cupboards, alphabet friezes on the walls and a generous sprinkling of teddy bears and toys are the stuff that nurseries are usually made of. But for Mark Wilkinson, a furniture designer and maker, that wasn't enough.

When he turned his attention to children's cupboards and wardrobes last year he wanted to use irregular shapes, as few right-angles as possible, and a large element of fantasy.

"I discovered that there had been little innovation in children's furniture. I wanted to make something that looked nice and that children could use easily, without hurting themselves," he says.

Mr Wilkinson runs a company that makes kitchens, bedrooms, bathrooms and one-off pieces. It was a commission for a crib for the grandson of a pigeon shooter that sparked off the idea of making children's furniture. He made a substantial swinging crib with a roughly carved pigeon perched high above. "It was the obvious finishing touch," he says.

He is a fifth generation cabinet maker. He learns from his father, who made scenery for television productions, and his grandfather, and by the age of 16 had acquired the skills of a master joiner. He has had no formal training in design and claims his ideas grow out of his dreams, and that he learnt to dream at school, where, as an unrecognised dyslexic, he was often unable to keep up.

In 1978, with two partners, he set up Smallbone of Devizes, which has become one of the most successful furniture making businesses of recent years. In 1982 he was bought out of the company, but resurfaced almost immediately with another business, where he employs more than 120 people. His wife Cynthia is managing director. Their children — Greg-



Dream ideas in the nursery: furniture maker Mark Wilkinson with his daughter Victoria, aged three, and the Goldilocks range

ory, aged 11, and Victoria, three — adore the designs. "Victoria is so thrilled that she invites her friends to 'come up and see my Goldilocks,'" her mother says. "She especially loves the dressing table and chair. She keeps plastic necklaces in the trinket drawer and tissues in the big drawer. It all makes her feel quite grown up."

A hugely bohemian character — even the flamboyantly russet moustache has a touch of the circus strongman about it — Mr Wilkinson had no difficulty dreaming up fantastical elements for his furniture.

He entertains from time to time in a jolly fitted Gothic tree house he built several years ago in a field close to his factory, inviting guests to drinks and dinner via a steep and narrow wooden ladder.

He makes the children's furni-

ture mostly from ash, with some chestnut. "I like the associations of the ash tree," he says. "In Celtic mythology, the ash is the tree of protection and healing. I find that appropriate for children."

His Goldilocks collection of children's furniture includes a cot-bed and ordinary bed, wardrobe, changing table, chest of drawers, dressing table, chair and bedside table. The design is clearly based on Disneyesque images, with distorted legs, exaggerated shapes, sweeping curves and everything slightly off-centre.

"These designs come from my emotional side," he says. "You can't come up with a design idea in your head; it has to come from the heart." There are teddy bear ears on the top of the wardrobe

around a teddy bear frieze, and more roughly hewn cleft staves in the head and foot boards of the bed and around the top of the wardrobe and changing table.

For the crib, which is 45in high and 45in long, he has used chestnut, but instead of inserting identical round bars, he has used staves cleft out of weal chestnut logs, which make the crib look rustic and quirky, and the wood soft and natural.

With furniture makers needing to tread a careful eco-line these days he imparts the ash, through a merchant, from plantations in the United States, where trees are harvested and replanted much like any other crop. "I tend to use English timber only for one-off commission pieces, because I don't want to be a party to the depletion of timber here. I prefer

to see English timber standing up," he says.

His furniture looks and feels user-friendly. There is a low chest (685) with three drawers side by side, which slide out easily and have firm stops, and a wardrobe (£737) with sloping sides. This has a hanging rail, shelf, and a deep drawer below.

The Goldilocks chair, at £219, has an exaggeratedly high back with teddy bear ears, tapered legs and a traditionally sculpted, bobbin-backed Windsor seat. The child's bed pictured is £710, and the dressing table costs £685. A wicker toy basket with wooden hinges on squat wooden bun feet costs £338.

• **Mark Wilkinson Furniture, Overton House, High Street, Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire SN15 2HA (0380 850004).**

Calling collect

Telephone cards are fetching high prices and the hobby is spreading

The Greeks do not have a word for it. Telephone card collecting is a rapidly growing hobby in many countries, but the suggestion that it could be promoted as a rival to philately under the name "fusilately" is dismissed by the world's leading expert, Dr Steve Hiscocks.

"Fusilately has no chance of becoming an international word," he says. "In France it would be taken to mean gun collecting, because *fusil* is French for a rifle."

France is impossible to ignore because telephone card collecting is serious business there. Three days a week there is a street market largely devoted to telephone cards, on the Avenue Matignon by the Rond-Point des Champs-Elysées. A recent Paris fair had about 40 booths manned by telephone card dealers, who reckon they already have 25,000 regular customers. There are probably at least another 50,000 *télécartistes*.

In Britain Dr Hiscocks, who gave up his job as a senior principal at the energy department to compile telephone card catalogues for Stanley Gibbons, is this weekend launching the hobby's first journal, *International Telephone Cards*.

The first public telephone card was issued in Italy in January 1976. Britain followed suit in 1981. Now telephone cards are issued in at least 150 countries, some of a big collecting business just like stamps or banknotes.

There are said to be a million telephone card collectors in Japan," says Dr Hiscocks, "but the issuing policy there has been

utterly irresponsible, with nearly 100,000 different cards in circulation already."

The Japanese can even buy blanks and use a machine in the street to make telephone cards to their own design using a photo, business card or whatever."

The first Japanese card issued is reported to changed hands for the equivalent of £28,000. Some French cards fetch prices up to £4,000. An early Taiwan pair reached £2,800.

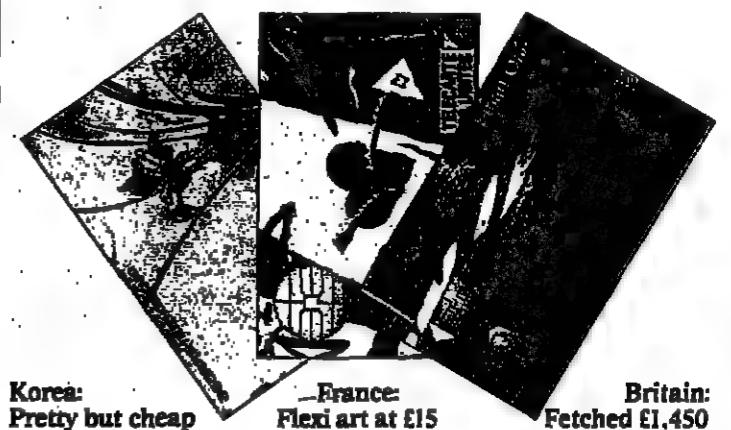
In Britain, the first ten-unit Phonecard, of which 50,000 were issued originally at 50p each, is catalogued at £150 unused and £30 used. An early complimentary five-unit card (handed out free to familiarise the public with the Phonecard concept) is now worth £15 unused. Unused cards from Mercury's first issue at the end of July 1988 are worth £125.

The most valuable British card is the 40-unit DFS, used by the manufacturers Landis & Gyr to promote its solid state metering technology. Only 50 were issued, and any unused are now worth at least £1,200.

Whether you call it fusilately, or a modern folly, Dr Hiscocks believes telephone card collecting, while still a cheap hobby to enter, has all the makings of a big collecting business, just like stamps or banknotes.

ROBIN YOUNG

• Subscriptions for the first six issues of the bi-monthly International Telephone Cards cost £14.50 from PO Box 77, Woking, Surrey, GU22 0HB.



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JEAN BENNER

Owl's in his barn, all's right with the world

Terrific news! I went out late the other night to the barn to get a bucketful of barley. The air was still, the sky clear and every sound for miles around was quite distinct. As I crept through the doors, I heard a rustling like that of a rat. But as I moved further the rustle became more urgent and out of the shadows came a winged white creature with wide eyes piercing down. He circled once above me, eyeing me with his marbled stare, and flew into the night. We have a barn owl in the barn.

I cannot think of anything which has given me more delight. I take it as a seal of approval that the intelligent owl has found a little corner of the agricultural landscape of which he approves; or even a barn he finds comfortable.

They don't build barns with crooked oak beams any more. A modern barn is clad in dreary asbestos on a rusting iron framework. Nothing much there for a

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

clawed foot to hold on to, or even a nice knoe-hole in which to insert an inquisitive beak. When the rotten walls of our barn were replaced last year, we debated whether it was worth preserving a circular hole in the apex of the roof, about the size of a dinner plate. After an old boy, who years ago laboured on this farm, insisted "you put that there of 'ole back in that barn for them 'owls", we ordered the builder to carve the orifice. It has paid off handsomely.

Of course, to an owl finding a farm like ours must seem like dropping in on heaven. The owl population, I read, was at its greatest in the days when farmers kept their corn in stacks, and hay in ricks; these provided havens for hordes of mice and rats which in turn gave the owl its daily bread.

But when the combine-harvester arrived, which processed the grain in the field rather than in the farmyard, the stacks went, the mice became fewer and the owls dwindled.

Well, I have removed all the mousetraps and the rat poison and our distinguished visitor can now eat away to his heart's content.

I wonder if anyone of influence is ever going to be as wise as the old owl and admit that traditional farming as practised in the first half of this century (and which we try to emulate on this farm), for all its financial faults and labouring hardships, was an inherently healthier way of farming the land.

A student came to work here for a few days and on his return to college told one of his tutors that we were growing a crop of vetches; or tares,



as they are known in these parts. The student was sharply reminded that this was an old-fashioned crop of no further use, and so not worth preserving. Is this poor lad receiving a rounded education?

Vetches are green-leaved plants, sweet and luscious to graze. They

are equally tasty if made into hay or silage to produce high-protein feed. The roots fix fertilising nitrogen in the soil, and the plant's ability to form a dense mat means that any weeds cheeky enough to rear their heads are smothered at birth. So the vetch is a fertiliser, rich feedstuff

I hope that the misguided lecturer was merely having a bad day; but if past form is anything to go by agriculture is not too careful with its precious past.

Were it not for the far-sighted breeders who kept alive the declining species, we would now have no Large Black pigs. No Alice.

At one stage it seemed as if the future of pigs lay in housing them in indoor intensive units. Outdoor pigs were assumed to be "no longer of value". Now, of course, the outdoor pig is in fashion again. But where would modern breeders have gone to acquire the hardiness the modern outdoor pig requires if all the old bloodlines had been allowed to die away?

And vetches, too, will have their day again. But if by that time they are rare, and those who preached their obsolescence by coming here for my precious seed, don't be surprised if I set the barn owl on them. We both know who our friends are.

Funny you should ask...

A series on outdoor matters in which you ask the questions — and provide the answers.

BIRD FEEDER

Our old wood-and-wire bird feeder was demolished by a squirrel, and we bought a tough new plastic model to carry on feeding the hordes of birds that flock to our garden. However, despite being filled with the same food they found irresistible in the last feeder, they won't come near the new one. The design is very similar — tubular with short perches at the base. Apart from being plastic, the only major difference is its colour: bright green. Could this be either revolting them or frightening them? — M. Spink, St Albans, Hertfordshire

CAT DEATHS

There was a concerned response to Valerie Swinger's request for ideas on why her mother's young cats were being found dead, curled up as if asleep in her garden.

I suspect the deaths are coincidental, and due to each having been involved in a motor accident, where they have sustained a glancing blow to their heads. Subsequently there is a brain haemorrhage, and in every case I've heard of the cat is found "curled up as if asleep", but dead. Strangely, country cats are more prone to such hazards than town-living cats. Mrs Swinger's mother might be better to adopt an older, rather timid cat as it would be less venturesome. To mark its territory — after the precaution of keeping it confined indoors for at least two weeks — it is useful to sprinkle litter from its tray around the garden perimeter.

Mrs P. Goodwin, member, Brighton and Hove Cats Protection League.

There is one rat poison that causes death by hypothermia — sodium alpha chloroform. The animal can die in its sleep on a cold night, though I would be surprised at a cat eating enough from a poisoned rat to kill it, unless it was a small cat. — Mrs H. McGee, Banbury, Oxfordshire

WATER SNAILS

G.T. Hulme, of Sale, Cheshire, asked for ideas to combat an invasion of water snails in his garden pond.

Each evening, distribute fresh lettuce leaves all over the pond. In the morning, remove the leaves with a long-handled fishing net. You will find the snails under the lettuce leaves. It has taken more than two years to remove the great pond snails from my pond. You do not get this trouble from the ramshorn snails, which are of great value in the pond. — Dr E.W. Bedford-Turner, Polegate, East Sussex

Please send your questions to: Funny you should ask, Weekend Times, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

Blazing saddles in Perth

Callum Murray meets up with the boots and stetsons set, intent on learning how to cast a long shadow on a quarter horse

In a corner of a big indoor ring, close to the chest-high, boarded perimeter fence, a man in a stetson is giving a horse a trying time. In the background, women riders with hard riding hats and straight backs trot in serene, disciplined circles.

The man swings one of the free ends of his rope in a long arc, behind him, catching his horse's deliberate crack across its powerful hind-quarters. It springs forward in a clumsy bound, snorting. But the man is ready for it, quickly bringing the horse back under control. Then he coaxes it into another manoeuvre, spinning it — and this time the horse does what is asked of it, spinning round to trot quietly back.

"So what's this?" asks a passing hard-hat sarcastically. "A cowboy meeting?" "No," one of the watching sermons replies with a hint of irritation. "It's Western horsemanship." More than that, this is a three-day Western riding "clinic" at the Mark Phillips Equestrian Centre at the Gleneagles Hotel in Perthshire, Scotland. Fifteen Western riding enthusiasts have paid £100 each to attend, most bringing their own horses.

The clinic has been organised by Kathleen Edwards, a Canadian who began Western riding after she moved to Scotland seven years ago. She says she is not making a profit from the clinic. The fees cover the hire of the ring, the instructor's plane fare, hotel bill and modest daily wage.

The instructor is Len Yule of Kentucky, who is sitting still on the horse and making it bend its face back towards him until its nose almost touches his knee.

In a few minutes he finishes the training session and walks over to the spectators. There are some traditionalists who object to Western training techniques, claiming they are cruel. Clearly Mr Yule is a little concerned about the im-

pression his methods might make on the inexperienced.

"I literally took physical control," he explains. "In about 15 minutes I had her going deep into the corners. She has been allowed to waffle and flop about. Other people set up situations. I have to be the bad guy and sort it out."

Western riding has its origins in the highly practical discipline of cattle herding, where there was no time for wilful or nervous behaviour of the kind often associated with horses kept for pleasure.

"Horses get spoilt because you accept that kind of behaviour," is one of Mr Yule's many maxims. If it is any consolation to the traditionalists, the modern Western horse has it easy, relatively speaking. "If your horse lost you a cow in the old days," a Western horse breeder tells me, "then I'm afraid you probably are it."

The classic Western breed is the Quarter horse, so called because it was originally bred as a sprinter for quarter-mile races. It is one of the few breeds specifically created to compete with man.

The horse Mr Yule has been subduing is typical, Ms Edwards says. "A sweetie-pie face and an apple bum." She adds that the "apple bum" has led to the misconception that quarter horses derive their name from their large hind-quarters.

The other common misconception about the Western riding style is based mainly on Western films (one of the few good exponents of the Western riding style in movies is, apparently, Clint Eastwood).

Mr Yule, however, says there is surprisingly little difference between the Western and "English" styles. "Good horsemanship is good horsemanship," he says.

In Western riding the hands are, perhaps, held slightly further apart; the body is kept slightly less upright; and the voice is used more. But the Western film image of the cowboy

using the reins to jerk his horse's head all over the place is flatly contradicted by everyone at the clinic. "The main thing is, we stay off their faces," Ms Edwards says.

Western riding has only taken off in a big way in this country in the last few years. While it is now reasonably popular in England, with a number of clinics and shows every year, in Scotland Western riders evidently still feel themselves to be an embattled minority. Moreover, quarter horses and other American breeds such as Morgans and Appaloosas are expensive to buy and maintain.

So why bother with Western riding when the style isn't so very different in the first place? One answer is provided by John Robertson, pupil at the clinic who is a policeman (though not, to his chagrin, a mounted one). He has, he says, always been interested in the history of the American West. Two years ago, having hardly ever been on a horse before, he bought a trained quarter horse for £2,350 and set about learning to ride it, Western style.

Like everyone else at the clinic (which is made up of roughly the

same numbers of men and women) Mr Robertson wears a stetson and jeans.

For the men, especially, one of the attractions of Western riding is that it avoids the formality of the British riding establishment and its pony club and hunting associations. He says his immediate ambition is not to win Western riding competitions (of which there are a growing number), but to go along to a riding club that teaches only English style, and show them exactly what a Western-trained horse can do.

Although to the untrained eye the Western-style training does look a little cruel, Mr Yule says that the original need for a working horse that was highly responsive and obedient meant that Western horses are simply more highly trained. One definition of dressage is "Any riding that goes beyond mere usefulness".

He also contends that a ranch horse has to understand far more than other horses. This is why the training can seem so rigorous. "The idea is to help the horse understand what we want," Mr Yule explains. "A lot of the European tradition is redundant. What we have to offer is horsemanship and lightness."

As an illustration of what the Western approach can achieve, even with English-trained horses, Mr Yule tells the story of a thoroughbred mare that had run over a groom and "creamed him pretty good."

The first thing Mr Yule did was to put the horse in a pen and get it to relate to him psychologically. Then he rode it without anything on its head, taking it to a water hole where it took one look and spun to one side.

Instead of resisting, Mr Yule continued the spin, making the horse turn eight or nine revolutions, bringing it out of the turn facing the water hole. Three more times the same thing happened, until Mr Yule says the horse thought: "This is thirsty work. Son of a gun, I think I'll have a drink." "Three weeks later," he concludes, "my six-year-old was riding her with a string in her mouth."

• Further information from the British Quarter Horse Association, 0203 696540.

'A lot of the European tradition is redundant. What we offer is horsemanship and lightness'

Squeakings of spring in your face and ears

FEATHER REPORT

now the wood is full of it. But let us tune our ears to slightly trickier birds: the secret squeakers of Britain. These are tree-creepers and goldcrest: common birds seldom seen. They do not come to bird-tables, they dislike open spaces, but any decent stand of trees should find them. Normally, as I say, squeaking.

Both these squeaks are unbelievably high, and thin. Some people can't hear them at all. Some lose the ability to hear high-pitched noises with age. I remember one crusty old bird telling me: "I no longer hear goldcrests or women." It was unclear whether he was implying a double misfortune, or simply that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

To acquire an ear for the squeakers is a kind of conjuring trick. Hear one squeak, and suddenly these furtive little birds are everywhere. Goldcrests are especially good at confuses, and they can turn up anywhere with trees, and they love the high canopy.

Tree-creepers are a rare example of a bird with an accurate name. They almost always do it in spirals. appearing and disappearing as they creep up the trunk. Both these birds eat tree-loving insects, and each has evolved a different technique for getting hold of them. Goldcrests pick them out among the leaves and twigs; tree-creepers from the bark. Two different ecological niches, in the jargon.

These are both niches that keep the birds out of sight most of the time, and one of the reasons why they squeak. They squeak to keep in touch with each other: contact calls, in yet more jargon. The tree-creepers' squeak is more sus-

pened: slightly less squeaky than the goldcrest's. As spring advances, they will add a squeaky song to their repertoire.

I took my jet-lag and my binoculars to this lovely chunk of wood ten minutes from my front door. What a boon it is to have somewhere like that, and so close to the M25. The M25 here is not so much a convenience as a veiled threat. This is a patch of the kind of woodland that we once had all over the place. Most of it was clear-felled before the last war, but here, re-planting and manage-

SIMON BARNES
• What's about: *Binders* — listen out for the latest spring singers, especially chaffinch and blackbird. *Twitchers* — surfer at Heel Bay, Devon; little bunting near Bude, Cornwall. Details from *Bindline*, 0891 70222.



Squeakers: tree creeper and goldcrest; common birds seldom seen

EVENTS

- Northumberland sea shaping: A National Trust walk to learn how coastal features have evolved. Wear sturdy footwear and waterproofs. Car park, Craster, near Alnwick, Northumberland (0665 576351). Today, 10am-11.30pm.
- Horspath dogs: Sheep, police and army dog society championship with 140 dogs, mainly German shepherds and border collies, tested on obedience, agility and nosework. The winner of the senior section enters the Kennel Club championships in October. Village Hall, Horspath, Oxfordshire (0472 342483, Mrs Jones). Today and tomorrow, 10am-5pm. Spectators free.
- Harrogate gardening course: A look at advanced propagation techniques such as air-layering, grafting and budding, with a practical session in the teaching greenhouse. Harlow Carr Botanical Gardens, Crag Lane, Harrogate, N Yorks (0433 565418). Fri, 11.30am-4pm. £9 (booking only).
- Stoneleigh stables: British Warm Blood Society stallion grading show. Trotting, cantering and jumping abilities tested. British Equestrian Centre, Stoneleigh, near Kenilworth, Warwickshire (0203 696697). Today 9am-5.30pm, tomorrow 9am-2.30pm. £14.50. Guided two-hour walk looking at
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GARDENS TO VISIT

- Oxfordshire: Theatrical landscape garden of the early 18th century, designed by William Kent, with water, fountains, sculpture and walled gardens. Rousham House, 2m S of Steeple Ashton. £2 (no children under 15). 10am-4.30pm.
- Leicestershire: Turn-of-the-century 16-acre garden with fine trees, formal pool and glasshouses. National Collection of skimmias. Leicester University Botanic Garden, Stoutheath, LE11 3JL. Free. Open weekdays 10am-dusk (Fri 3.30pm).
- Wildfowl in Lancashire: RSPB guided two-hour walk looking at

BBC 1

6.45 Open University: Biology - Body Plans 7.10 Maths: Symbols and Equations 7.35 Bath in the 18th Century 8.00 Earth's Physical Resources. Introduction (8/970413)

8.55 News and weather (1023239)

9.00 Getting Through. Second world war heroine Odette Hallowes describes how, despite her grueling ordeal, her faith in humanity is unshaken (6705351)

9.15 This is the Day with Phyllis Thompson. From Amesbury House in Ealing west London, a halfway house for those with mental health problems, helping them to cope in the community (s) (21593)

9.45 Olympic Grandstand. Steve Rider introduces further coverage from France including the men's super-giant slalom and the climax of the two-men bobsleigh (5198142)

12.00 See Hear Magazine for the hearing impaired (13016)

12.30 Country File. Rural issues examined by John Craven (3138852)

12.45 Weather (5020780)

1.00 News (53511142) 1.05 On the Record presented by Jonathan Dimbleby and John Cole. The guest is former Tebbit (289974)

2.00 Eastenders. Omnibus edition. (Ceefax) (s) (7/74535)

3.00 Match of the Day: The Road to Wembley. Desmond Lyman introduces live coverage of the FA Cup fifth-round tie between Swindon and Aston Villa. The commentator is John Motson. Plus the draw for the quarter-finals, live from the FA headquarters in London (6487805)

5.05 The Clothes Show with Jeff Banks, Seline Scott and Caryn Franklin. David Bellamy asks the show to rid him of his woolly bobble-hat image; and the difficulties young disabled people face with wheelchairing (s) (214516)

5.30 Antiques Roadshow. Hosted by Hugh Scully from the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovil, Somerset (Ceefax) (524051)

6.15 Play It Safe with Anne Rice (Ceefax) (8/66867)

6.25 News with Moira Stuart. Weather (502523)

6.40 Songs of Praise from Bath Abbey (Ceefax) (s) (846687)

7.15 "Alli! Alli! starring Gordon Kaye and Carmen Silvers. Are Madam Fanny's eyes to be believed when she discovers her daughter in bed with the Führer? (Ceefax) (s) (748535)

7.45 Lovejoy: Eric of Arabia starring and directed by Ian McShane. Lovejoy is asked to authenticate an oriental terracotta pig but ends up in hospital after reading Eric's antique four-wheeled molar-inke. (Ceefax) (s) (749784)

8.35 As Time Goes By. Judi Dench and Geoffrey Palmer star in the last episode of the romantic comedy series. Jean's daughter has suddenly developed a crush on Lionel (s) (750505)

9.05 One Foot in the Grave: The Broken Reflection starring Richard Wilson and Annette Crosbie. Victor's brother arrives unexpectedly from New Zealand on one of his regular 25-year visits. With Richard Pearson. (Ceefax) (s) (914124)

9.40 News with Michael Buerk. Weather. (Ceefax) (508933)



The man with the hot seat: Magnus Magnusson. (9.55pm)

9.55 Mastermind celebrates its 20th anniversary. Magnus Magnusson questions this year's first contenders in the Great Hall, Reading University. The specialist subjects in children's literature since 1850, the history of Asia and the Pacific, Greek mythology and Louis Armstrong (21546)

10.25 Encounters: God's Gift. The story of a religious congregation of women in a small town in Australia. Members and former members reflect on the way things used to be and how they have changed. (Ceefax) (294326)

11.15 Olympics 92. Helen Rollason introduces coverage of the original set pattern programme of the ice dance (702790)

12.30am Mahabharat (r) (1278456) 1.10 Weather (4759369)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes

The numbers now appearing next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCode® numbers, which allow you to instantly programme your video recorder with a VideoPlus+ model. VideoPlus+ can be used with most VCRs. Tap in the number of the programme you want to record. For example, if you have a VideoPlus+ on 0288 (21204) (rate charged at 45p per minute peak, 20p off-peak) or write to VideoPlus+, VTM Ltd, 77 Fulham Palace Road, London W8 6JL. Videoplus+®, Pluscode® and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Marketing Ltd.

ITV VARIATIONS

ANGLIA
As London except: 12.30pm-1.00pm Coast (6/83340) 12.50-1.05pm Angels. News (5930413) 2.00 Child of Achievement (6025) 2.30-3.25 A Place in the Sun (5984495)

BORDER
As London except: 12.30pm-1.00 Garden- ing Time (3236449) 2.00 McDonald's Child of Achievement (5980303) 2.30-3.25 The Big Breakfast (5974) 3.30 Breakfast (5980303) 4.35 The ITV Chart Show (5974) 5.15-5.30 Jobfinder (5984495)

CENTRAL
As London except: 12.30pm-1.00 Garden- ing Time (3236449) 2.00 Child of Achievement Awards (600303) 3.00 Film: The Asset Underdog (5980303) 3.30-4.30 5.30 Heaven & Hell - Innocent Abroad (700) 8.00-8.30 Dennis (6025) 12.00 CTI Head (974) 1.30 Murphy's Law (59811) 12.05 Prisoner: Cell Block H (5270251) 1.00 Club Night (87494) 1.30 Murphy's Law (59811) 1.30-1.45 The Thin Blue Line (5980708) 4.25 The ITV Chart Show (5974) 5.15 to 5.30 Jobfinder (5984495)

HTV WEST
As London except: 12.30pm-1.00 Farming World (2228449) 2.00 HTV Newsweek (2228449) 2.20 HTV Newsweek (2228449) 2.30-3.25 McDonald's Child of Achievement (5980303) 4.35 The ITV Chart Show (5974) 5.15-5.30 Jobfinder (5984495)

HTV WALES
As HTV West except: 2.00pm Wales on Sunday

TSW
As London except: 12.30pm-1.00 TSW Farming World (2228449) 2.00 Children's News (5980303) 2.30-3.25 McDonald's Child of Achievement (5980303) 4.35 The ITV Chart Show (5974) 5.15-5.30 Jobfinder (5984495)

YORKSHIRE
As London except: 12.30pm-1.00 Coast (6/83340) 2.00-2.20 John Bradburn (5984495)

TVS
As London except: 12.30pm News (5980303) followed by Agenda (61777) 2.00 McDonald's Child of Achievement (5980303) 2.30-3.25 Coronation Street (5974) 4.35-4.55 The Big Breakfast (5974) 5.00 Club Night (87494) 5.30-5.45 Mrs. Land (59811) 2.30 Club Thunder Over the Plains (5980708) 4.25 The ITV Chart Show (5974) 5.15-5.30 Jobfinder (5984495)

TYNE TEES
As London except: 12.30pm-1.00 The Best of British (5980303) 2.00-2.20 John Bradburn (5984495) 2.30-3.25 The Back Page (5980303) 4.35 The Back Page (5980303) 5.00 Club Night (87494) 5.30-5.45 Mrs. Land (59811) 2.30 Club Thunder Over the Plains (5980708) 4.25 The ITV Chart Show (5974) 5.15-5.30 Jobfinder (5984495)

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RADIO 3

8.55am Weather

7.00 Morning Concert: Dunstable (Veni Sancte Spiritus); Byrd (Fantasia in A); Bach (Sonata IV in D)

7.30 Morning Concert cont: Mendelssohn (Quartet in E flat, Op 12); Schumann (Adagio and Allegro in A flat, Op 70); Weber (Symphony No 2) (s)

8.35 Listen with Music: The first of eight programmes about English music in the 18th century. Corelli (Sonata in A, Op No 9; Piccinni Trio); John Blow (organ); We're Ev'ry Guest: Concert of Musicians under Rooley; John Blow (Voluntary in A; Ton Kenorgan, organ); William Croft (Hymn and Divertimenti); Nigel North, theorbo; Colin Tilney, chamber organ); Geminiani (Concerto grosso in D minor, La Polka, Purcell Quartet)

9.15 The Juilliard Quartet: Bartók (Quartet No 3); Thomson (Quartet No 2); Paganini (Quartet in A flat, Op 6)

10.15 Music Weekly, with Peter Paul Nash

11.00 From the Proms 1981: The Finnish RSO under Jukka-Pekka Saraste, with Olli Mustonen, piano, plays Debussy (Printemps). Review of the Proms on a Theme of Paganini; Status (Lemminkäinen Suite) (s)

12.50 Replay: The first of a new series in which Philip French plays gems from the BBC sound archive. Bertrand Russell in 1952 on Lord Jellicoe and Lytton Strachey (1.05)

1.10 Your Concert Choice, with Paul Guinard: Milford Suite in D minor, Op 8; Mozart (Sonata in F for two pianos, K 497); Schubert (Gretchen am Spinnrade, D118); Joseph Hellmesberger (Salzburger); Alkan (Funeral March on the Death of a Pianist); Haydn (Symphony No 104)

2.35 The Seven Musical Chances, counter-tenor, and Robert Spencer, lute, perform songs by John Dowland, Henry Lawes, Fulmer Humphrey, John Blow and Henry Purcell (r)

3.35 Poet of the Month: Tom Paulin reads his own poems

12.00 News

FREQUENCIES: Radio 1: 105kHz-12/235m 108kHz/27.5m FM 97.6-98.8. Radio 2: 98-102.2. Radio 3: 12/15kHz 247m. Radio 4: 198kHz-1515m 92.4-94.6. Radio 5: 653kHz/433m. 908kHz/330m. LBC: 1522kHz/261m. FM: 97.3. Capital: 1549kHz/194m. FM: 95.8. GLF: 1458kHz/206m. FM: 94.9. World Service: MW 548kHz/483m.

COMPILATION BY PETER DEAR AND CAROLINE DONALD

TV CHOICE PETER WAYMARK/DRAGO CHOICE PETER DAVILLE

BBC 2

6.30 Open University: Maths Methods - Direction 6.55 Modern Art: Courbet 7.20 Statistics: Fitting the Pattern 7.45 The York Mystery Plays 8.10 Data Models and Databases 8.35 The Message of Starlight (791061)

9.00 Olympic Grandstand. Live coverage of the two-men bobsleigh event (4115535)

9.45 Town Portraits. John Grundy explores Barnard Castle, County Durham (r) (5026271)

5.55 Open University: Motion - Newton's Laws 10.20 Society and social science 11.10 Open Forum Magazine 11.35 Running the Country: TV the Global Impact (9783168)

12.00 Olympic Grandstand. The conclusion of the men's super-G and men's K120 alpine jumping (742056)

3.00 Film: A Distant Trumpet (1984) starring Troy Donahue and Suzanne Pleshette. Lively but weakly cast cavalry western which ended the career of its distinguished 77-year-old director, Raoul Walsh (7244055)

4.50 Animation Now. A film by Hungarian animator Csaba Ferenc (3658448)

5.00 Rugby Special. Chris Reax introduces coverage of yesterday's France v England and Ireland v Scotland matches (21516)

6.00 Olympics Today. Highlights of the day's events (306836)

6.35 The Money Programme. A report on the possible merger of British Airways, KLM and North West Airlines, including an interview with Sir Colin Marshall, BA's chief executive, who talks about his company's future. Among others taking part are Bernard Attal, chairman of Air France, Al Checco, chairman of North West Airlines, Mr Kalakowski, head of sales and marketing for Delta, and congressman Jim Oberstar, chairman of the American Congress Air sub-committee (4167222)

7.15 The New Year's Day in Wild Freedom. A celebration of the New Year's Day in Norway. Part of its 40th anniversary, narrated by Fredrik Thomassen (s) (20024)

8.05 Goodbye Comrades. Second of two programmes revisiting citizens of the former Soviet Union who were first filmed seven years ago for the series Comrades. (Ceefax) (243790)

8.55 Trying Times: Moving Day starring Candice Bergen and Keauhou Reeves. Barbara decides it is time to move on after living in the same house for 20 years (844448)

9.25 Did You See...? presented by Jeremy Paxman. The Lost Language of Cranes, Taggart and Evening Shade are discussed by novelist David Lodge, barrister Helena Kennedy, OC, and comedian Simon Ravenhill. Plus a report from Tony Stoberry on Screen Two: The Object of Beauty

© CHOICE: Until television made her into a national celebrity, Hannah Hauxwell lived an isolated life in the Yorkshire Dales without the comforts of electricity or running water. Now a partly 65-year-old, she has made her first trip outside the British Isles. A film crew went with her. The programme is at pains to draw the parallel between Hauxwell and the spinster ladies of Victorian Britain, with innocence as the key word. Tonight we follow her by train and boat to Paris, a little white-haired figure doing the sights and offering her thoughts to an off-screen voice (603)

6.30 News (5980303) 12.55 LWT Weather (5022158)

1.00 News and weather (15472005)

1.10 Walden. Brian Walden talks to Labour's deputy leader Roy Hattersley (s) (5533559)

2.00 Sheep's Funday! Pat Sharp introduces an episode of Batman and Wrestling from America (764448)

2.55 Dinosaurs. Prehistoric fun (2224974)

3.25 Film: The Asialist Underground (1985) starring James Mason. Muddled wartime adventure based on the true story about the monks of Asial who hid Jewish refugees and helped them to escape. Directed by Alexander Ramati. (Oracle) (6477058)

5.30 Bullseye. Darts and general knowledge game (79)

6.00 Hannah Hauxwell - Innocent Abroad

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2.00 Sheep's Funday! Pat Sharp introduces an episode of Batman and Wrestling from America (764448)

2.55 Film: The Asialist Underground (1985) starring James Mason.

Muddled wartime adventure based on the true story about the

monks of Asial who hid Jewish refugees and helped them to escape. Directed by Alexander Ramati. (Oracle) (6477058)

5.30 Bullseye. Darts and general knowledge game (79)

6.00 Hannah Hauxwell - Innocent Abroad

© CHOICE: Until television made her into a national celebrity, Hannah Hauxwell lived an isolated life in the Yorkshire Dales without the comforts of electricity or running water. Now a partly 65-year-old, she has made her first trip outside the British Isles. A film crew went with her. The programme is at pains to draw the parallel between Hauxwell and the spinster ladies of Victorian Britain, with innocence as the key word. Tonight we follow her by train and boat to Paris, a little white-haired figure doing the sights and offering her thoughts to an off-screen voice (603)

6.30 News (5980303) 12.55 LWT Weather (5022158)

1.00 News and weather (15472005)

1.10 Walden. Brian Walden talks to Labour's deputy leader Roy Hattersley (s) (5533559)

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BBC 1

7.00 Open University: Introduction to Pure Maths — Symmetry (7851370)
 7.25 News and weather (8437850)
 7.30 Crystal Tipps and Alastair: Animation (1) (1877776) 7.35 Wiz Bang. Fun and laughter for the young (s) (758863) 7.45 The Jetsons. Space-age cartoon fun (1) (285738)
 8.05 Eggs 'n' Baker. Cheryl Baker's guests include Madness who sing "I Must Be Love" and Michael McIntyre who chats about herbs and flowers (s) (8708883) 8.35 Thunderbirds. Cartoon adventures (1) (6381138)
 9.00 Going Live! Philip Schofield and Sarah Greene are joined by poet Roger McGough. Music is provided by the band PM Dawn (s) (78370)
 10.30 Grandstand introduced by Steve Rider. The line-up is (subject to alteration): Winter Olympics: 10.35 and 11.50 Bobsliding from La Plagne; 11.10 the women's downhill from Meribel; 12.00 Cricket: highlights of the final one-day international between New Zealand and England in Christchurch; 12.35, 1.05 and 1.35 Racing from Chepstow; 1.20 Football and Rugby Union: Previews of today's FA Cup matches and a look ahead to this afternoon's rugby internationals; 1.00 News; 1.50 Rugby Union: live coverage of the match in Paris between France and England, followed by highlights of the game between Ireland and Scotland in Dublin; 4.35 Final Score (2822284)

5.10 News and weather (7658562)
 5.20 Regional News and sport (3754592)
 5.25 Stay Tuned! Tony Robinson introduces a selection of cartoons featuring love and romance (1977080)

5.50 Big Break. Jim Davidson and John Virgo are joined by Dean Reynolds, Dene O'Kane and Gary Wilkinson for another round of the snooker and general knowledge quiz. (Ceefax) (s) (832318)

6.20 Noel's House Party. Cilla Barnes (Ken Kercheval) leaves Deles behind and joins in more resistible fun and games with Noel Edmunds (s) (626134)

7.10 The Paul Daniels Magic Show. The chirpy magician introduces Wifus Wif from Germany and, from China, the vase-juggling Ming. (Ceefax) (s) (537738)



A family affair: John Michie and Millicent Martin (7.5pm)

7.55 Moon and Son. Ponderous astrological thriller series starring Millicent Martin and John Michie as mother and son sleuths. When a young woman's body is found in a car belonging to a Euro MP, Gladys leaps into action. The murder trail leads to an infamous chateau. (Ceefax) (s) (403793)
 8.50 News with Martyn Lewis. (Ceefax) Sport and weather (334582)
 9.10 That's Life! Esther Rantzen and her team tackle more consumer problems and continue their search for a new singing star. (Ceefax) (s) (649080)
 9.50 Olympics '92 and the Road to Wembley. Desmond Lynam looks back at highlights from three of today's FA Cup fifth-round ties, and action from the free programme of men's figure skating competition and the women's downhill (9652254)

12.00 Film: Pursuit (1972) starring Ben Gazzara and Martin Sheen. Efficient made-for-television disaster movie about a millionaire extremist who plots to kill the American president and a large number of the citizens of San Diego (9554933)
 1.10 Weather (4782697)

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SATELLITE

SKY ONE
 • Via the Astra and Mancopco satellites.
 6.00pm Danger Bay (9202) 8.30 Element Boy (8080) 7.00 Fun Factory (4117203) 11.30 Tenants (1987) 11.50 Star Trek (1977) 12.00 Breakfast Club (2020) 12.30 Combat (1970) 2.20 W.W.F. Superstars of Wrestling (1989) 3.00 W.W.F. (1973) 4.00 Iron Horse (60008) 5.00 'I' (1978) 6.00 Rockin' Robin (1988) 7.00 The X-Files (1993) 8.00 Unseen Horror (1991) 9.00 Cops I (9202) 9.30 Cops II (9207) 10.00 All American Wrestling (82264) 11.00 The Rockies (4047) 12.00 Sonny (61519)

SKY NEWS
 • Via the Astra and Mancopco satellites.
 News on the hour, 8.00am Sunrise (15320) 1.00 News (1987) 1.00 The Movie (17842) 10.30 Our World (52592) 11.00 Dayline (7370) 12.30 Newsline Weekend (5554) 12.30pm These Were the Days (84469) 1.30 Holiday Destinations

(5115) 2.30 Fashion TV (17409) 2.30 These Were the Days (20047) 4.50 Our World (8218) 5.00 Live At Five (5115) 6.00 News (1987) 6.30 The Movie (17842) 7.30 Star Trek (1977) 8.00 Breakfast Club (2020) 8.30 Tenants (1987) 10.30 Newsline Weekend (5554) 11.00 Star Trek (1977) 12.30 Tenants (1987) 1.30 Target (2822284) 4.30 These Were the Days (5115) 5.30 Target (28245)

SKY MOVIES+
 • Via the Astra and Mancopco satellites.
 6.00pm Showcase (12370)
 8.00 Options (1987) Jungle Danger (50641)
 10.00 Superheroes (1989) Bill Murray and Robert Coogan as book robbers in a crazy degustus (2929413)
 4.00 Running On Empty (1989). A radical political couple struggle to keep their family together while on the run (416023). End at 6.00pm

12.00 Jesus (1988) Drama about a man who practices without a license (4347973)
 2.00 The Edge And The Cruelitas (1986) Eddie and Robert Coogan as book robbers in a crazy degustus (2929413)
 4.00 The Trial Of The Incredible Hulk (1989) The Hulk fights a gangster (5760593)

THE MOVIE CHANNEL
 • Via the Astra and Mancopco satellites.
 6.15pm Playtime (1987) Tale set in a small living community (567803)
 7.30 Jack And The Beanstalk (Cartoon) (1987) 8.00 The Wizard Of Oz (1939) 8.30 Southern Star (1980) A crew of miners search for African diamonds (4347973)
 10.30 The Return Adventures Of The Witch Family (1987) A family find trouble when they move into a house where the previous owner was a werewolf (21251)
 12.15pm Columbus: Captain, Murky! (1981) A tenacious detective investigates (51154)
 2.15 The Incredible Shrinking Woman (1981) Liz Tornin shrinks to a tiny (202045)

4.00 Dance Academy (1989) Italian musical (511188)
 5.50 The Hunt With Dame Barbara Cartland (644788)

8.10 Lady In A Corner (1988) A woman editor rights a porn magazine (561188)

8.15 Days Of Thunder (1990) Tom Cruise as a racecar driver racing (2355214)

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